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Letter dated 14 December 2018 from the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to resolution 2399 (2018) addressed to the President of the Security Council

The members of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to resolution 2399 (2018) have the honour to transmit herewith, in accordance with paragraph 32 (c) of resolution 2399 (2018), the final report on their work.

The attached report was provided to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic on 13 November 2018 and was considered by the Committee on 7 December 2018.

The Panel of Experts would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Romain **Esmenjaud**
Coordinator

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Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic extended pursuant to Security Council resolution 2399 (2018)

Summary

Leaders of armed groups have continued to send contradictory signals in the lead-up to the political dialogue aimed at the adoption of a global peace agreement in the Central African Republic. This is especially true of leaders of the ex-Séléka coalition who, although participating in various meetings and expressing support for the African Union Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, have yet to take any concrete steps towards disarmament.

Further, ex-Séléka leaders continue to display growing opposition to the Government in the context of the ongoing redeployment of the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA) in their areas of influence. In their view, redeployment to these areas should only be done after the signing of a global agreement. At a meeting in Moyenne-Sido on 5 August 2018, sanctioned individual Abdoulaye Hissène of the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), Ali Darassa of the Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC) and Mahamat Al-Khatim of the Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC) made a significant show of force and unity, though not resulting in concrete cooperation between their factions on the ground.

In order to strengthen their military position in view of the upcoming dialogue and to prepare for possible confrontation with national defence and security forces, ex-Séléka groups have continued to acquire weaponry. The present report provides detailed information on illicit trafficking of weaponry by FPRC and UPC, in particular from the territory of the Sudan.

The opposition of the ex-Séléka leaders to any outside influence in territories under their control, whether from the State or other armed groups, reflects their reluctance to have their economic interests challenged in any way. The report describes the primary importance of the cattle sector to the operational and funding strategies of most armed groups, in particular the Fulani-dominated UPC, Siriri and Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation (3R).

Armed groups also continue to generate revenue through gold and diamond mining activities, mainly through illegal taxation systems. Furthermore, the Panel noted that, given the weakness of national regulations on the legal trade in gold, some economic operators export gold originating from areas under the control of armed groups and therefore contribute to their funding, at least indirectly. The report also provides information on the involvement of Ousmane Mahamat Ousmane, an ex-Séléka leader and former adviser to the President, in a case of diamond trafficking to Cameroon.

While armed group leaders continue to portray themselves as responsible actors protecting civilian populations and humanitarian actors, their fighters continue to commit gross human rights violations. The Panel investigated cases involving such violations, including targeted attacks against civilians and humanitarian actors, in the Nana-Grébizi, Ouham and Ouham-Pendé prefectures. Such acts were perpetrated by fighters of FPRC, MPC and the Mouvement national pour la libération de la Centrafrique (MNLC) of Ahmat Bahar, as well as anti-balaka combatants. The report also provides information on attacks against United Nations peacekeepers, especially by self-defence groups in the south-east of the country. Furthermore, the Panel expresses concern over the underreporting of conflict-related sexual violence and the limited support to victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the Central African Republic.

The conflict in the Central African Republic remains at the crossroads of a number of regional dynamics and crises. The report provides information about regional fighters in search of lucrative opportunities provided by armed groups. Further information is also provided on the cooperation early in 2018 between FPRC and the rebel group of John Tshibangu, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Panel has continued to monitor the implementation of sanctions measures (the arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban). The report includes an update on the continuing efforts of the Government to acquire military equipment on the basis of exemptions to the arms embargo and relevant notifications, as well as on the ongoing deployments of the national defence and security forces. The Panel underlines that, in violation of the arms embargo, national authorities have authorized the import of weapons and hunting ammunition.

In violation of the sanctions measures, sanctioned individuals Abdoulaye Hissène and Nourredine Adam also continued to travel, for instance, to participate in a meeting in Khartoum on 27 and 28 August 2018. Furthermore, several listed individuals, all former anti-balaka leaders, continued to receive their salaries from the national authorities, including Alfred Yékatom, who was arrested on 29 October 2018 after he fired his shotgun in the National Assembly.

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* The annexes are being circulated in the language of submission only and without formal editing.

I. Background

1. On 30 January 2018, the Security Council adopted resolution 2399 (2018), by which the Panel of Experts was mandated, inter alia, to provide to the Council, after discussion with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic (the Sanctions Committee), a final report no later than 31 December 2018.

2. In accordance with resolution 2399 (2018), the present report, inter alia, assesses the implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Council (an arms embargo, a travel ban and an asset freeze) and addresses a number of issues with the aim of identifying individuals and entities involved in sanctionable activities, as defined in paragraphs 20 and 21 of the resolution.

3. The report covers the period from 1 March to 6 November 2018, the date of completion of its drafting.

Cooperation

4. In 2018, the Panel travelled to 14 of the 16 prefectures of the Central African Republic (see map in annex 1.1). It also conducted official visits to Belgium, Cameroon, the Congo, France and Italy. The decrease in the Panel's travel budget resulted in its decision to cancel a number of projected trips to the Central African Republic and other States in 2018. In that connection, on 25 July 2018 the Secretary-General notified Member States of the difficult financial situation confronting the Organization and indicated that the Secretariat might need to take measures to reduce expenses. In October 2018, the Panel was informed of cuts to its budget which further diminished its ability to execute mandated tasks. The present report reflects the work that the Panel was able to do within the reduced budget allocation.

5. Since the beginning of its mandate, the Panel has addressed 51 official communications to Member States, international organizations and private entities, receiving various levels of response to its requests (annex 1.2).

6. Pursuant to paragraph 33 of resolution 2399 (2018), the Panel has continued to exchange information with other panels or groups of experts established by the Security Council, in particular the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Panel of Experts on the Sudan.

7. The Panel thanks the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) for its support and collaboration during the reporting period.

Methodology

8. The Panel endeavours to ensure compliance with the standards recommended by the Informal Working Group of the Security Council on General Issues of Sanctions in its report of 22 December 2006 (see S/2006/997, annex). While it intends to be as transparent as possible, in situations where identifying sources would expose them or others to unacceptable safety risks, the Panel intends to withhold identifying information.

9. The Panel is equally committed to the highest degree of fairness and will endeavour to make available to parties, where appropriate and possible, any information in the report for which those parties may be cited, for their review, comment and response, within a specified deadline.

10. The Panel safeguards the independence of its work against any effort to undermine its impartiality or create a perception of bias. The Panel approved the text,

conclusions and recommendations in the present report on the basis of consensus prior to its meeting with the Committee and prior to the transmission of the report by the Panel Coordinator to the President of the Security Council, in accordance with resolution 2399 (2018).

II. Armed groups' involvement in the political process and national politics

A. The political process

African Union Initiative

11. While in previous reports, the Panel had underlined that the existence of parallel peace initiatives had contributed to delaying the start of an inclusive political dialogue in the Central African Republic, the Panel notes that during the reporting period the African Union Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic has been progressively recognized by all stakeholders as the main framework for the political process in the Central African Republic.[1]

12. The recent assumption of a larger role by MINUSCA within the African Union Initiative and the announced future appointment of a joint African Union-United Nations special envoy for the Central African Republic have helped position the African Union Initiative at the centre of all political initiatives. All involved actors now claim to act within the framework of the African Union Initiative.[2] At the same time, representatives of the Government and the armed groups have expressed to the Panel their concerns regarding the absence of a clear timeline in the African Union Initiative. By the time of writing of the present report, neither the date nor the venue of the dialogue had been agreed upon.

13. In line with the objectives set out in the African Union road map, the African Union's panel of facilitators completed a series of consultations with the 14 main armed groups with a meeting held in Bouar (Nana-Mambéré Prefecture) from 28 to 30 August 2018. In that meeting, the armed groups' grievances were consolidated in a single document that was handed to the President of the Central African Republic, Faustin-Archange Touadera, on 31 August 2018 in preparation of the national dialogue between armed groups and the Government (annex 2.1). Information obtained by the Panel revealed that the main topics at stake in the discussions between the Government and armed groups revolved around the following issues: decentralization, power-sharing, the management of natural resources and justice (including the lifting of sanctions) (see also S/2018/729, para. 39).[3]

14. Together with its partners,[4] the Technical Secretariat of the African Union Initiative continued to organize training workshops aimed at building the capacity of the dialogue's stakeholders: Government representatives, armed groups leaders, civil society members and victims' representatives.

Khartoum meetings

15. On 10 July 2018, 4 of the 14 armed groups involved in the African Union Initiative were invited to a meeting in Khartoum under the auspices of representatives of the

[1] Meetings with diplomatic sources, Bangui, 1 August, 28 September and 8 October 2018.

[2] Meetings with Government and diplomatic sources, Bangui, 28 and 29 August and 25 and 30 September 2018.

[3] Meeting with a Government official, Bangui, 26 September 2018. Meeting with a confidential source, 27 October 2018.

[4] The Community of Sant'Egidio, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes.

Russian Federation and the Government of the Sudan. With the exception of the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), represented by its vice-president, listed individual Nourredine Adam, none of the other invited armed groups (Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC), Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC) and the Maxime Mokom branch of anti-balaka) participated. Some armed groups representatives told the Panel that they had not gone to Khartoum because they did not want their commitment to the African Union Initiative to be questioned.[5]

16. On 28 August 2018, a second meeting was organized in Khartoum with the participation of the same four armed groups. The participants signed a declaration of understanding (annex 2.2) in which they committed themselves to peace and to restoring the necessary conditions for the free circulation of persons and goods.

17. Following the Khartoum meeting, the Government of the Central African Republic issued a communiqué on 29 August 2018 in which it took note of the Khartoum meeting organized by the Russian Federation and the Government of the Sudan (annex 2.3). President Touadera also addressed a letter of thanks to the President of the Russian Federation (annex 2.4). As the Khartoum meeting was held on the same day as the meeting of the African Union's panel of facilitators with armed groups in Bouar, concerns were raised about the Khartoum meeting being a rival process to the African Union Initiative.[6] However, the declaration signed by the armed groups, the Government communiqué and a letter from the President of the Sudan to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (annex 2.6) all underlined that the Khartoum process was set within the framework of the African Union Initiative. In addition, in September 2018 the Russian Federation was granted observer status to the African Union Initiative, joining the G5 members in Bangui in that capacity.[7]

18. The three ex-Séléka factions which were signatories to the Khartoum declaration – FPRC, UPC and MPC – issued separate communiqués on 19 and 22 October 2018 declaring their disengagement from the Khartoum process (annex 2.5; for their motives, see paras. 26–29 below). By the time of writing of the report, the holding of another meeting in Khartoum was nevertheless being considered (see annex 2.6).

19. Annex 2.7 provides information on the discussions held in the framework of the Advisory and Monitoring Committee for National Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Repatriation.

B. Tensions between ex-Séléka factions and the Government ahead of the dialogue

20. In addition to the contested issues on the agenda of the planned African Union dialogue (see para. 13 above), several other developments have contributed to further exacerbating the tensions between the Government and the armed groups. These are mainly the deployment of national defence and security forces in various locations (see para. 179 below) and the perception by some armed groups that the Khartoum meetings were intended to replace the African Union Initiative.

[5] Meeting with UPC representative, Bangui, 25 September and 8 October 2018; meeting with FPRC representative, Ndélé, 10 October 2018.

[6] Meetings with diplomatic sources, Bangui, 25 September 2018.

[7] The G5 is composed of the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the United States of America and France, plus the European Union, the World Bank, China and the Russian Federation.

Ex-Séléka groups and the deployment of the Forces armées centrafricaines and internal security forces

21. Though to varying degrees, ex-Séléka groups have regularly expressed their opposition to the deployment of the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA) in areas under their control. In the absence of a political agreement that sets out the conditions of integration of the armed groups' troops into the national defence and security forces, ex-Séléka groups consider the presence of FACA, and sometimes internal security forces, as a confirmation that the Government is opting for a military solution to the crisis (see S/2018/729, paras. 38 and 39).

22. In this connection, FPRC has made efforts to show the population and the international community (see para. 60 below) that areas under its influence experience peaceful coexistence and therefore do not require the presence of FACA or internal security forces. In a documentary aired by the television network France 24, the group attempted to project an image of harmony among communities in Ndélé.[8]

23. MPC and UPC have traditionally refused to align themselves with the strong political stance of FPRC; instead they have preferred to adopt a more moderate position, expressing support for disarmament and the restoration of State authority.

24. However, the ongoing FACA redeployment in MPC and UPC areas of influence is likely to undermine their capacity to generate revenue through control of transport routes and the cattle business (see sect. VI below). In June 2018, UPC reluctantly agreed, after intense internal debate and negotiations with MINUSCA, that FACA soldiers could cross territory under UPC influence to deploy to Bangassou (Mbomou Prefecture) (see S/2018/729, para. 19).[9] The deployment of FACA soldiers in Bambari on 1 October 2018 confirmed the growing uneasiness of UPC on this issue, as the soldiers' presence constitutes a challenge to the group's interests in Ouaka Prefecture.[10] On 4 October, Ahmat Ali, the UPC political coordinator, threatened civilians from Bambari and representatives of the Muslim population with retaliation in the event of cooperation with the FACA elements.[11] On 31 October 2018, a clash between UPC and MINUSCA occurred in El Haji neighbourhood, reportedly leaving at least 12 injured.[12] Recently deployed FACA soldiers participated in the fighting alongside the peacekeepers.

Ex-Séléka groups and the Khartoum process

25. At the Khartoum meeting of 28 August 2018, in addition to the adoption of the declaration of understanding (see para. 16 above), a number of other issues were discussed.[13] They included decentralization of the State, as well as the possibility that armed groups be granted the role of "temporary self-defence units" in charge of providing security in their respective areas of influence until the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme (annex 2.8). To further encourage armed groups to participate in the political process, discussions also revolved around the creation of business opportunities in areas under their control, as well as the possibility that some of their current activities serve as a basis for official ventures operating under Government authority. For instance,

[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zNmDh976Zk (accessed on 30 October 2018).
[9] Telephone conversation with UPC representative, 29 October 2018.
[10] Meeting with UPC representatives, Bambari, 2 October 2018.
[11] Confidential report, 5 October 2018.
[12] Confidential report, 2 November 2018.
[13] Meeting with UPC, anti-balaka and FPRC representatives, Bangui, 2 and 3 September 2018, and Bambari, 2 October 2018.

suggestions were reportedly made to UPC leaders to become involved in the creation of a slaughterhouse in Ouaka Prefecture.[14]

26. Leaders of the three ex-Séléka factions expressed interest in the proposals made. At the same time, following the meeting, armed groups displayed growing scepticism regarding the Khartoum process, considering that it was solely promoting the interests of the Government.[15] In the communiqués announcing their withdrawal from the Khartoum process (see para. 18 above), Abdoulaye Hissène (FPRC), Ali Darassa (UPC) and Mahamat Al-Khatim (MPC) indicated that the Khartoum declaration had been instrumentalized and had so far only facilitated FACA deployment. The three leaders reiterated their commitment to the African Union Initiative.

27. Participation in the Khartoum process was also contested within the armed groups, as their leaders did not coordinate their positions internally. Members of the political coordination platforms of UPC and FPRC, who consider they had not been consulted prior to the Khartoum meeting, clearly expressed to the Panel their disapproval of the initiative.[16]

28. The internal tensions reached a critical level within FPRC, as demonstrated by a series of contradictory communiqués issued between 27 and 29 October 2018 (annex 2.9). The communiqués reflected the diverging views of the leaders regarding the vote for the dismissal of the Speaker of Parliament, Karim Meckassoua, on 26 October 2018, but also the latent tensions over the Khartoum process between sanctioned individuals Nourredine Adam, an active supporter of the process, and Abdoulaye Hissène, who now opposes it.

29. Within MPC, internal tensions also emerged about the sharing of the funds ($50,000) that were reportedly given to each armed group's representative in Khartoum in exchange for their participation.[17]

Continuous attempts at reunifying ex-Séléka groups

30. Abdoulaye Hissène has intensified his efforts at reunifying the ex-Séléka groups. In recent months, the latter factions have on several occasions expressed common positions with a view to creating a united front against the Government; the common rejection of the Khartoum declaration (see para. 26 above) represented the culmination of these efforts. In August 2018, UPC leader Ali Darassa, MPC leader Mahamat Al-Khatim, and FPRC leader Abdoulaye Hissène held several meetings in Ouham and Nana-Grébizi Prefectures. In particular, they made a show of unity on 5 August 2018 in Moyenne-Sido (annex 2.10), where they discussed the political process and committed themselves to taking joint actions to address security issues related to cattle (see para. 106 below).

31. The attempts at coordinating the groups' political positions did not, however, translate into any progress in terms of operational coordination. Trust among the three groups is not strong enough to enable any of the factions to conduct military operations in areas under the influence of others. For instance, UPC refused any reinforcement from other groups when FACA deployed in Bambari, despite the offer of support made by FPRC.[18]

[14] Meeting with UPC, anti-balaka and FPRC representatives, Bangui, 2 and 3 September 2018, and Bambari, 2 October 2018.

[15] Telephone conversations with armed group representatives, 22 October 2018.

[16] Meeting with UPC and FPRC representatives, 2 September 2018 and 10 October 2018.

[17] Meeting with MPC representatives, Bangui, 3 October 2018.

[18] Meeting with confidential source, Bambari 3 October 2018.

C. Risk of destabilization in Bangui: the connections between armed men and political actors

32. With the presence of international troops in the Central African Republic, the prospect of a successful offensive against Bangui by an armed group based in the provinces has become unlikely. Since the fall of the former President François Bozizé, all attempts at destabilizing national authorities have instead been conducted through the mobilization of Bangui-based armed groups or militias. In September–October 2015, for instance, violence was instigated in Bangui by actors aiming to delay the electoral process or overthrow the transitional authorities (see S/2015/936, paras. 8–41).

33. The Panel assesses that an attempt at destabilizing the Government remains a possible scenario today. Events such as the vote of dismissal of the Speaker of Parliament, Karim Meckassoua, who was accused among others of violation of the Assembly rules,[19] on 26 October 2018, contributed to the existence of a divisive political climate.

34. Below, the Panel describes three categories of armed actors who possess the capacity to create disorder in the capital. The Panel was informed that some politicians, as well as members of the ex-Séléka factions, have built alliances with some of these armed actors in order to acquire the capacity to create turmoil in the capital, should they be tempted one day to put pressure on, or destabilize, the Government.

Politicization of self-proclaimed PK5 "self-defence" groups

35. Self-proclaimed self-defence groups continued to maintain a strong influence in the PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui. In a document dated 15 July 2018 and addressed to the Central African Republic authorities, the African Union and MINUSCA, the groups' leaders requested their inclusion in the African Union Initiative (annex 2.11). While their request was rejected, the document demonstrates their willingness to better organize themselves and put forward political claims for amnesty of their members and participation in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process.[20]

36. In the same document, Nimery Matar Jamous, alias "Force", presented himself as chief of staff of the PK5 "self-defence" coordination platform. Owing to his influence in the neighbourhood, ex-Séléka factions (see S/2018/729, para. 68), and even members of the Government, have at times sought his support.

Frustration of retired elements of the Forces armées centrafricaines

37. In February 2018, as part of security sector reform efforts, a retirement process was launched by the Minister of Defence and the FACA Chief of Staff with the support of the United States of America, the European Union Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM) and MINUSCA. A total of 780 FACA elements agreed to retire against the payment of their salary arrears under specific criteria. Retired FACA elements met by the Panel claimed that assurances of further financial compensation, in addition to the payment of salary arrears, were made by the military hierarchy. They claimed that those promises had yet to be fulfilled.[21] They also told the Panel that their weapons were still in their possession.[22]

[19] Grievances against Mr. Meckassoua were presented on 18 October 2018 in a note to the National Assembly signed by about 100 Members of Parliament.

[20] Meeting with "Force", Bangui, 9 September 2018.

[21] Meeting with retired soldiers, Bangui, 12, 14 and 15 October 2016.

[22] Ibid.

38. Many individuals participating in the retirement programme are from the Yakoma ethnic group. This resulted in some actors claiming that the process had intentionally targeted members of that ethnic group, who had been massively recruited into the army during the presidency of André Kolingba (1981–1993), himself a Yakoma.[23] The news of the arrest for a short time of André Kolingba's son and former presidential candidate, Désiré Kolingba, during a meeting of his party on 19 September 2018, also fuelled the impression that members of the Yakoma ethnic group were being subjected to a hostile campaign by national authorities, which in turn strengthened the hostility of the retired soldiers to the Government.[24]

39. The frustration of the retired FACA elements has been increasingly politicized.[25] The Panel has identified a politician whose identity cannot be disclosed (see para. 8 above), who is willing to support an unconstitutional change of Government. This individual is trying to instrumentalize the discontent of the retired FACA elements and has promised to give them weapons and ammunition in exchange for their support. He also approached ex-Séléka factions, in particular FPRC, asking them to provide him with weaponry. In turn, he promised them Government positions should his plan succeed. The modus operandi of this individual, based on the creation of ad hoc coalitions, illustrates a usual practice in the Central African Republic, where social tensions are often instrumentalized to provoke political unrest.

Discreet political influence of anti-balaka groups in Bangui

40. Anti-balaka fighters in Bangui still possess a significant operational capacity and still have an impact on national politics. Therefore, securing their support remains a strong asset for political actors.

41. Most of the anti-balaka elements in Bangui belong to the Mokom branch of anti-balaka. Unlike the ex-Séléka groups, Maxime Mokom did not withdraw from the Khartoum process and supports FACA redeployment, even in the absence of a political agreement.[26] However, the creation of the Rassemblement centrafricain during the Khartoum meeting of 28 August 2018 confirmed the maintenance of connections that had been established between the ex-Séléka groups and the Mokom branch in the framework of the so-called "Nairobi group" (see S/2015/936, para. 24-26). The evolution of their cooperation will be key to the political process.

42. Mokom maintains a low profile and rarely publicly criticizes the national authorities. But some of his elements are pushing for a more aggressive stance to put pressure on the Government, including through the organization of demonstrations in Bangui.[27] Mokom has refused to respond to those calls, arguing that it would not serve the political interests of his group.[28]

III. The crisis in the Central African Republic and regional insecurity

43. Various regional dynamics continue to impact the crisis in the Central African Republic (see S/2018/729, paras. 40–48). In addition to political considerations that

[23] Ibid.

[24] Meeting with confidential security source, Bangui, 27 September 2018.

[25] See https://centrafriqueactu.com/2018/04/10/faca-les-candidats-a-la-retraite-menent-une-campagne-feroce-dintoxication-au-pk9-et-a-nzila-au-sud-de-bangui/ and http://www.corbeaunews.ca/centrafrique-les-militaires-retraites-battent-le-pave/ (accessed on 28 October 2018).

[26] Meeting with Maxime Mokom, Bangui, 5 September 2018.

[27] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 6 September 2018.

[28] Meeting with Maxime Mokom, Bangui, 5 September 2018.

may affect the regional countries' involvement in the African Union Initiative (see para. 51 below), a number of cross-border factors fuel insecurity in the Central African Republic and neighbouring countries.

44. Section VI of the present report describes the manner in which cross-border and internal transhumance serve as main drivers of armed groups' activities. Other key regional dimensions of the conflict considered in the report include the transborder movement of fighters in search of lucrative opportunities offered by various armed groups (see, for instance, paras. 82 and 127–133 below), the related movements of small arms and light weapons (paras. 68–71 and 101–103 below) and trafficking in natural resources (paras. 75 and 99–100).

45. The transnational character of security threats has prompted several actors to call for collective responses. At a joint summit meeting held in Lomé on 30 July 2018, Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) addressed the peace and security threats confronting the subregional organizations (see para. 139 below). Also, at its forty-sixth ministerial meeting, held in Brazzaville on 1 June 2018, the United Nations Standing Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa reiterated the need for regional approaches to address common threats like the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the Lord's Resistance Army, as well as violent extremism and terrorism.[29]

A. Cross-border cooperation

46. During the reporting period, the Government of the Central African Republic continued to engage neighbouring countries in signing bilateral and trilateral agreements to establish commissions on cross-border issues (see S/2018/729, paras. 47 and 48). In a meeting with the Chair of the Sanctions Committee on 5 October 2018, Prime Minister Simplice Sarandji identified Cameroon, Chad and the Sudan as priority countries. None of the commissions has to date been formally established despite the recognition on both sides of their necessity.[30]

47. However, bilateral cooperation on cross-border security issues has improved, particularly with Cameroon. On 13 September, a Government delegation led by Marie-Noelle Koyara, Minister of Defence of the Central African Republic, met with Cameroonian authorities in the border town of Garoua-Boulai (East Province of Cameroon). The aim was to reinforce bilateral cooperation on various issues. The movement of non-State actors, banditry, seasonal cattle migration and trafficking in arms and natural resources are among the main issues affecting the border between the Central African Republic and Cameroon.

48. With the support of MINUSCA, the Government of the Central African Republic also increased cooperation with Cameroon on cross-border issues at the working level. Local authorities from the two countries, namely the prefect of Mambere-Kadei and the sub-prefect of Kentzou, met in August 2018 and agreed to further exchange information and organize regular meetings with a view to addressing security threats in the area, in particular cross-border movement of fighters, as well as trafficking in arms and natural resources in relation to Siriri activities (see paras. 98–103 below).[31]

[29] Press communiqué No. 131/02-2018 of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

[30] Meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangui, 2 October 2018.

[31] Panel's mission to Berberati-Gamboula-Kentzou (20–24 September 2018).

B. Central African Republic: playground for foreign fighters and armed groups

49. The movement of fighters lending their services to armed groups continued to represent a major security issue in the region. Coups and attempted coups in the Central African Republic and other countries such as Chad and Equatorial Guinea have often been organized with the support of fighters from neighbouring countries, at times using foreign territories to launch their attacks (see S/2014/452, para. 18–22).

Alleged coup in Equatorial Guinea

50. The commission of inquiry set up on 24 January 2018 by the Government of the Central African Republic to investigate the possible role of its nationals in the alleged coup d'état of January 2018 in Equatorial Guinea (see S/2018/729, para. 46) has submitted its report to the General Prosecutor in Bangui.[32] By the time of writing the present report, no indictment had been issued in this regard.

51. While the report of the commission of inquiry confirms the involvement of Central African Republic nationals in the alleged coup d'état, the Panel understands that the commission reached different conclusions than those contained in the investigation report submitted to the Government of the Central African Republic by the authorities of Equatorial Guinea.[33] Differences concerning the level of responsibility of Central African Republic nationals in the attempted coup have strained relations between the two countries.[34]

A rebel group from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in search of fighters and weaponry

52. In its 2018 midterm report (S/2018/729, para. 44), the Panel mentioned that John Tshibangu, a former army colonel of the Democratic Republic of the Congo who deserted in 2012 and has since been planning an armed struggle against the national authorities of that country, was hosted by the armed group FPRC in Birao (Vakaga Prefecture), Central African Republic. Several pictures and videos recently obtained by the Panel document Tshibangu's presence and military activities in the Central African Republic (see annex 3.1). Tshibangu arrived in Birao on 13 January 2018, where he was hosted at the house of FPRC "General" Fadoul Bashar. He negotiated a deal with listed individual Nourredine Adam to obtain fighters and weapons. The latter reportedly agreed to maintain "diplomatic" relations with Tshibangu's rebel group, but refused to provide armed fighters given his desire to keep his focus on the struggle in the Central African Republic.[35]

53. Nourredine Adam still agreed to make a video of Tshibangu accompanied by FPRC armed fighters, designed to create the impression that Tshibangu was backed by a solid armed faction. In the video, which was released on the internet around 17 January 2018,[36] Tshibangu threatens Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[37] Tshibangu reportedly paid FPRC leaders for the recording of this video, which also features "General" Adoum Kanton.[38] During his stay in

[32] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 6 October 2018.
[33] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 29 September 2018.
[34] Ibid.; meeting with diplomatic sources, Bangui, 4 October 2018.
[35] Meeting with FPRC member, Birao, 5 October 2018.
[36] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR0MCz89VNc (accessed on 2 November 2018).
[37] Meeting with confidential source, Birao, 2 October 2018. Meeting with FPRC, Birao, 5 October 2018.
[38] Meeting with FPRC member, Birao, 5 October 2018. Telephone conversation with confidential source, 25 October 2018.

Birao, Tshibangu also contacted Moussa Assimeh, one of the leading Séléka generals in 2013 (see para. 70 below, S/2016/1032, para. 15, and S/2017/639, para. 70 and annex 5.9), asking for weapons and ammunition. Assimeh's response remains unknown to the Panel.[39]

54. Accompanied by Adoum Kanton, Tshibangu departed Birao on 21 January for the Sudan, by way of Am Dafok.[40] On 30 January 2018, roughly one week following his departure, Tshibangu was arrested in the United Republic of Tanzania. At the time of writing of the present report, Tshibangu was reportedly in the Ndolo prison in Kinshasa.

Return of Chadian "General" Michel Doumro

55. Michel Doumro is a former Chadian rebel originally from southern Chad. He was part of a rebel group active in the 1980s and 1990s, generally referred to as "codos". Later, between 2005 and 2009, "General" Doumro became a high-ranking military commander of the Central African Republic rebel group Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie, led by Jean-Jacques Démafouth. Doumro obtained this position owing to his military background and the ethnic connections existing between the populations of the north-western Central African Republic and south-western Chad.[41] Doumro was reportedly reintegrated into the Chadian administration in 2010 before leaving the country again in 2017.[42]

56. Michel Doumro's presence was observed in May 2018 in the Markounda sub-prefecture.[43] He travelled at the beginning of July 2018 to Bangui, where he was arrested by the gendarmerie a few weeks later in the Combattant neighbourhood.[44] As of 17 October 2018, Doumrou was detained in the premises of the Groupe de Sécurité et d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale under the name of Michel Mbaïlemal.[45]

57. Information gathered by the Panel reveals that Doumro tried to reconnect with former elements of the "codos Mbakara" who used to provide security to the "codos" rear bases in Central African Republic in the 1990s. He reportedly tried to recruit elements to create a new rebel group in Chad without much success.[46]

C. Deficient controls at airports, ports and on roads

58. For information on the deficient controls at airports, ports and on roads to counter regional trafficking in weaponry, natural resources and drugs, see annex 3.2.

IV. Developments in areas of influence of ex-Séléka factions and continuous fighting with anti-balaka and self-defence groups

59. The areas of influence of ex-Séléka factions have remained largely unchanged. In spite of the improved relations among the ex-Séléka groups, which was facilitated by agreements signed in Ippy on 9 October 2017 (see S/2017/1023, paras. 136–139),

[39] Meeting with confidential source, Birao, 2 October 2018.
[40] Meeting with FPRC member, Birao, 5 October 2018.
[41] Emmanuel Chauvin, *La guerre en Centrafrique à l'ombre du Tchad. Une escalade conflictuelle régionale?*, (Paris, Agence Française de Développement, 2018). Available from https://www.afd.fr/sites/afd/files/2018-03-04-43-15/guerre-centrafrique-tchad.pdf.
[42] Meeting with confidential source, 14 October 2018.
[43] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 12 October 2018.
[44] Meeting with confidential source, 14 October 2018.
[45] Meeting with officer of the internal security forces, Bangui, 17 October 2018.
[46] Meeting with confidential source, 14 October 2018.

in Bria on 3 May 2018 (see S/2018/729, para. 76) and in Moyenne-Sido on 5 August 2018 (see paras. 30 and 106 of the present report), there are still recurring episodes of violence between ex-Séléka factions and anti-balaka or self-proclaimed self-defence groups.

A. Widespread insecurity and gross human rights violations

Armed group leaders' double discourse

60. On the one hand, armed group leaders reiterate to local populations and the international community their commitment to secure the areas under their control, guarantee humanitarian access and halt criminality (see annex 4.1).[47] On the other hand, they do not take any concrete measures to prevent or mitigate the criminal and predatory acts committed by their fighters. This duplicity is well illustrated in the Kaga Bandoro/Moyenne-Sido/Batangafo triangle (Ouham and Nana-Gribizi Prefectures, see map in annex 4.2). Between July and September 2018, the leaders of the three main ex-Séléka factions – Abdoulaye Hissène, Mahamat Al-Khatim and Ali Darassa – moved into the area with a significant number of troops,[48] which coincided with an increase in exactions against the local population as well as robberies of humanitarian agencies.[49]

High levels of criminality affecting humanitarian actors

61. The response capacity of humanitarian actors in that triangle has been seriously affected by a series of security incidents since the summer of 2017 (see S/2017/1023, paras. 181–187). National employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become an easy and profitable target for armed elements, as they live outside secured NGO compounds and their salary is largely above the average local income. For example, from January to September 2018, an NGO working in Batangafo and Kabo reported 34 robberies against its national personnel, while the national employees of an international organization operating in Kaga Bandoro were targeted 22 times.[50] In both cases, ex-Séléka elements were the main perpetrators.

62. There is a general consensus in classifying the incidents involving humanitarian actors as common criminality. However, the link between these criminal acts and the conflict dynamic is evident. For example, in Kaga Bandoro, the increase in incidents has to be seen in relation with the significant presence of ex-Séléka fighters in the area since April 2018 (see S/2018/729, paras. 71 and 72). In September 2018, the situation became unbearable as five NGOs were robbed in a week. On 12 September, several humanitarian organizations operating in Kaga Bandoro suspended their activities in a sign of protest and armed groups' leaders promised to intervene. However, only a few days later, on 17 September, armed elements violently robbed another international organization.[51]

[47] Meetings with civil society and NGO representatives, Batangafo, 4–5 October 2018. Meetings with confidential sources, Bangui, 30 September and 1 October 2018.

[48] From Kaga Bandoro, the three leaders went to Moyenne-Sido from 3 to 13 August 2018 and to Batangafo from 14 to 19 August 2018.

[49] Confidential report, 22 October 2018.

[50] Meetings with confidential sources, Bangui, 14 October 2018.

[51] Meeting with NGO representatives, Bangui, 9 and 16 October 2018.

Increased vulnerability of civilians living in the Kaga Bandoro/Moyenne-Sido/ Batangafo triangle

63. During its mission in the area,[52] the Panel counted eight ex-Séléka illegal checkpoints on the road between Batangafo and Moyenne-Sido, mostly held by underage uniformed and armed elements. In Batangafo, recent clashes marked the breach of the non-aggression agreement that ex-Séléka and anti-balaka fighters signed on 24 February 2018.[53] On 1 November 2018, a series of acts of retaliation targeting civilians provoked heavy fighting between local anti-balaka and ex-Séléka elements, resulting in the looting and burning of the internally displaced persons camp and in the displacement of more than 10,000 people towards the hospital compound (see annex 4.3).[54] Among the 20 people wounded, three died as a result of severe burns.[55] Even before the fighting, about 24,000 displaced people were exposed to daily aggressions, robberies and arbitrary detentions perpetrated by anti-balaka elements living in the camp and operating under the command of Arsene Debat alias "Sendé".[56]

64. In Kabo, local residents shared with the Panel their concerns about the security situation in the town.[57] MPC local commanders claim to ensure security in town but are powerless against rackets and robberies perpetrated by some ex-Séléka chiefs (such as "General" Ajat) whose fighters circulate in the area.[58] Despite regular taxes paid to MPC to assure their protection, local traders are particularly targeted, and therefore seek to acquire weapons in the name of self-defence. Mahamat Al-Khatim, the MPC leader, has acknowledged awareness of the situation but rejects any responsibility and attributes these exactions to uncontrolled armed elements operating in the region.[59]

65. Kaga Bandoro's surroundings have not been spared by insecurity. In June 2018, the population living in the area of Mbrès were trapped in a series of retaliations between anti-balaka fighters led by Francko Yagbengué, alias "Pélé", and Muslim self-proclaimed self-defence groups called "Mujahidins" and led by a local youth leader, Mahamat Djouma. Even though the clashes were triggered by exactions against Muslim traders and cattle herders, the control of the five gold mining sites in the area is likely to be the real driver of the violence. As a result, in less than a month, 18 civilians (seven women and 11 men) were killed, between 1,500 and 2,000 houses were burnt and 7,000 people were forced to flee.[60]

Bria: appalling ethnic-based violence for control of resources

66. FPRC and its local allies (see S/2017/1023, paras. 145–152) directly perpetrated gross human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Bria (Haute-Kotto Prefecture). Since May 2017 (see S/2017/639, paras. 76–78), more than 50,000 internally displaced persons have been living near the MINUSCA base in the so-called "PK3 camp", where local anti-balaka fighters led by Thierry François Pelenga alias

[52] Panel's mission to Batangafo, Kabo, Moyenne-Sido and Kaga Bandoro (4–10 September 2018).
[53] Meeting with ex-Séléka and anti-balaka representatives, Batangafo, 5 September 2018.
[54] Confidential report, 2 November 2018; Telephone conversation with confidential source, 6 November 2018.
[55] "CAR: More than 10,000 seek refuge in MSF-supported hospital in Batangafo following clashes", Médecins Sans Frontières, 2 November 2018. Accessed on 2 November 2018: https://prezly.msf.org.uk/car-more-than-10000-seek-refuge-in-msf-supported-hospital-in-batangafo-following-clashes.
[56] Meeting with NGO representatives, Batangafo, 4 September 2018.
[57] Meeting with local authorities, Kabo, 6 September 2018.
[58] Meeting with confidential sources, Kabo, 7 September 2018.
[59] Meeting with Mahamat Al-Khatim, Kaga Bandoro, 10 September 2018.
[60] Confidential report, 24 August 2018.

"Bokassa" have established their bases and harass the local population.[61] Tensions between anti-balaka and ex-Séléka elements have been progressively rising and have peaked since August 2018. As a result, at least 30 civilians (including 12 women and two children) have been killed and more than 44,000 newly displaced people have arrived in the PK3 camp (see map in annex 4.4).[62]

67. On 5 August 2018, FPRC launched an offensive on the road to Irabanda (south of Bria) to halt the targeting of Muslim traders and to dismantle anti-balaka bases. More than 50 heavily armed FPRC elements led by Damboucha Hissein reportedly killed several dozen people, including at least five civilians, and burned 36 houses. Later, on 25 August 2018, ex-Séléka elements led by Issaka Aubin attacked an anti-balaka base in the Bornou neighborhood of Bria and killed anti-balaka leader Theophile Ndoumba.[63] During the attack, 12 civilians (including five men, five women, one minor and one disabled person) lost their lives. The same day, the FPRC coalition reportedly ambushed and killed at least 15 civilians belonging to the Banda ethnic group who were working at the mining site of Matabissi (18 km north of Bria). Finally, on 6 September 2018, FPRC elements abducted 12 civilians from the PK3 camp. As anti-balaka leaders did not accept the conditions imposed for the liberation of the prisoners, the ex-Séléka fighters executed nine of the abducted civilians (seven women and two men). The following day, seven dead bodies, including those of five women, were placed in front of the MINUSCA gate by an angry crowd from the PK3 camp (see annex 4.5).[64]

B. Follow-up on arms trafficking between the Sudan and the Central African Republic

68. Ex-Séléka factions, in particular FPRC and UPC, have continued to acquire military equipment from Sudanese territory to complement their stocks.[65] With the acceleration of the training, rearming and deployment of FACA and internal security forces, as well as the absence of a political agreement setting out the conditions of the armed groups' integration into the national defence and security forces (see S/2018/729, para. 81),[66] ex-Séléka factions consider that they need to continue to strengthen their own military capacities. The influx of weapons from the Sudan, noted since January 2018, has resulted in UPC and FPRC fighters increasingly being seen with pistols and AK-type assault rifles, as well as rocket-propelled grenade launchers and machine guns mounted on their vehicles (see annex 4.6). During the reporting period, there were also several reports of automatic gunfire in Ndélé and Kaga Bandoro, among other places, reportedly due to the testing of newly acquired weapons.[67]

69. As set out in the Panel's 2018 midterm report (see S/2018/729, annex 6.3), FPRC and UPC purchased weaponry and vehicles in the Sudan, thereby benefitting

[61] In August and September 2018, MINUSCA police launched several weapons search operations to dismantle anti-balaka bases and arrest their local leaders. Confidential reports, 20 August and 26 September 2018.

[62] Confidential report, 15 October 2018.

[63] Theophile Ndoumba and Thierry François Pelenga alias "Bokassa" led two separate anti-balaka factions.

[64] Confidential report, 16 September 2018.

[65] Several sources referred to stockpiles present in amongst others Bossemptele, Ndélé, Bambari and Alindao.

[66] Meetings and communications with confidential source, 8 and 23 October 2018. Meeting with Rassemblement patriotique pour le renouveau de la Centrafrique (RPRC) member, Birao, 3 October 2018. On 7 September 2018, during a meeting of the Sanctions Committee, the representative of the Sudan underlined that his Government was implementing measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons in relation to the disarmament campaign.

[67] Confidential reports, 17 and 18 September 2018.

from Abdoulaye Hissène's connections with traffickers. Sudanese traffickers have taken advantage of the arms collection campaign of the Government of the Sudan in Darfur[68] to amass weapons and ammunition from Sudanese fighters and sell them to ex-Séléka factions. The Panel was informed that in April 2018, UPC, through a deal with Abdoulaye Hissène, had acquired Sudanese weapons, including 200 AK-type assault rifles, six machine guns and 25,000 rounds of ammunition. In September 2018, UPC reportedly concluded a new weapons deal with Sudanese traffickers directly; the group made an advance payment of FCFA 45 million (about $77,500) to obtain machine guns and five utility vehicles (pickup trucks) equipped with weapons; UPC reportedly still has to pay the traffickers FCFA 50 million (about $87,000).[69] The Panel was provided with pictures of some of the weapons and ammunition purchased through both deals (annex 4.6).

70. In 2017 (see S/2017/639, para. 70 and annex 5.9), the Panel cited the role of Moussa Assimeh in the recruitment and introduction of Sudanese armed fighters and weaponry into the Central African Republic to strengthen FPRC ranks (see also para. 53 above). Moussa Assimeh was reportedly present in Bambari in April 2018 to deliver the equipment and receive the money for his deal with UPC.[70] Musa Hilal, the notorious Darfurian Arab militia leader who refused to comply with the voluntary disarmament,[71] is also frequently cited, including by ex-Séléka leaders, as one of the principal suppliers of weapons from the Sudan.[72] Even though he has been under arrest since November 2017, according to well-informed sources, Hilal and his entourage can still be contacted, as UPC and FPRC have reportedly done in view of the above-mentioned deal of September.[73] Uncontrolled elements of Mohammed Hamdan Dagolo, alias "Hemmeti", head of the Rapid Support Force of the Sudan, are also reportedly involved in arms trafficking.[74] Part of the weaponry from the Sudan reportedly originates from Libya,[75] but the Panel could not find any evidence of this claim.

71. Sudanese traffickers mainly use two roads to transport weaponry into the Central African Republic. Loaded pickups go from Am Dafok towards Tulu (a Sudanese border village 120 km south of Am Dafok), further to Ouadda Djalle/Ouadda, and reach their final destination in Bria, Ippy, Bambari or Alindao. The second road goes from the border villages of Um Dukhun, Tissi or Am Dafok to Birao and further to Ndélé and Kaga Bandoro.[76]

72. Last, videos have circulated[77] showing FPRC elements searching the convoy with hospital equipment that passed through Ndélé in May 2018 (S/2018/729, para. 13). In one of the videos, Abdoulaye Hissène declares that he would seize the military equipment found aboard; however, the Panel did not find any evidence thereof.[78]

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[68] On the different phases of the Sudanese disarmament campaign, see S/2017/1125, paras. 98–102.

[69] Meeting and correspondence with confidential sources, 8 and 11 October and 2 November 2018.

[70] Confidential correspondence, 8 October 2018.

[71] On Musa Hilal, see S/2017/1125, paras. 24–31 and 98.

[72] Meetings with RPRC and FPRC representatives and confidential sources, Birao and Bangui, 3, 5 and 8 Octobe, 2018.

[73] Meetings and communication with confidential sources, 8 and 23 October 2018.

[74] Meeting with confidential source, Birao, 5 October 2018.

[75] Confidential sources, 11 April, 27 September and 8 October 2018

[76] Meeting with the cabinet of the sultan, a traditional authority with judicial and mediation functions, and economic operators, Birao, 2 and 3 October 2018. Confidential report, 17 September 2018. See also S/2016/694, para. 74.

[77] See, for example, www.france24.com/fr/20180713-reporters-doc-centrafrique-voie-armes-seleka-logone-ndele-independance-autonomie/ (accessed on 1 November 2018). Other videos on file with the Panel.

[78] Meetings with confidential sources, Ndélé, 24–26 July and 9–11 October 2018.

C. Anti-balaka weaponry and the dismantling of artisanal arms manufacturing facilities

73. Even though they are increasingly observed carrying conventional weapons (see S/2018/729, annex 6.3 and S/2017/1023, para. 104),[79] anti-balaka fighters are still primarily equipped with artisanal weapons and hunting ammunition which they use during military operations (see S/2018/729, paras. 88, 89 and 108). This practice is common among all the anti-balaka groups in the centre and east regions. While hunting ammunition continues to be smuggled into the country by way of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (see paras. 195 and 196 below), anti-balaka fighters have also developed the necessary expertise and means to hand-produce artisanal rifles and modify hunting ammunition in illegal arms manufacturing facilities. As detailed in annex 4.7, MINUSCA conducted several operations to dismantle such facilities.

D. Exploitation and trafficking in natural resources

74. Natural resources remain a significant source of revenue for armed groups active in areas of northern and eastern Central African Republic, resulting in competition for territorial control, for instance around mining sites in the Mbrès and Bria areas (see paras. 65 and 67 above).

75. During its mission to Ndélé (24–26 July 2018), the Panel collected information confirming that, in spite of the presence of a representative of the mining administration, trafficking in gold and diamonds remains rampant (see S/2018/729, para. 86). Five of six collectors now working in Ndélé were already operating before the crisis (see annex 4.8). These operators now pay taxes to the FPRC illegal administration instead of to the State's representatives. Similarly, instead of working with official buying houses (which are now closed), they now have to sell their goods illegally, whether in Bangui or Chad and the Sudan. At times, traffickers from the area also transport gold and diamonds to Cameroon; to reach Cameroon, rather than crossing the Central African Republic, they transit through southern Chad where routes are considered safer.[80]

76. As has been observed in Bria (see S/2018/729, para. 84), some ex-Séléka leaders directly participate, most likely for their personal account, in the trafficking of diamonds and gold. It is particularly the case of those who were already working in the mining sector before the crisis, such as Adoum Djafar (FPRC political coordinator), who previously acted as the local representative of artisanal miners in Ndélé.[81]

V. Developments in areas bordering Cameroon

A. Activities of armed groups in the north-west

77. The dialogue to be held under the auspices of the African Union Initiative encourages armed groups active in the north-west to better articulate their political positions. At this stage, anti-balaka groups operating in the Bouar and Bocaranga sub-prefectures and Retour, réclamation et réhabilitation (3R) are represented in meetings of the Advisory and Monitoring Committee for National Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Repatriation. This is also the case with the

[79] Confidential reports, 1 July, 17 July and 18 October 2018.

[80] Meeting with artisanal miners and collectors, Ndélé, 25 and 26 July 2018.

[81] Ibid.

Révolution et justice (RJ) factions (RJ/Sayo and RJ/Belanga, see S/2016/1032, paras. 202–204), which have even expressed readiness to commence disarmament without any preconditions as part of the early beginning of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process.

78. In early September 2018, Abbas Sidiki, the leader of 3R, suggested to all groups in the area (with the exception of Ahmat Bahar's MNLC) the idea of forming a "general assembly". Sidiki's objective was to convince the other groups to make their participation in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process conditional on the opening of broader discussions in view of obtaining political concessions from the Government.[82] At the time of writing of the present report, all the groups had agreed to the idea of such an assembly,[83] but the prospect of the adoption of a common position on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation remained to be confirmed.

79. The 3R leader even considered representing the anti-balaka local groups from the area in the upcoming dialogue. Those groups are frustrated with their inability to participate directly in the negotiations. They are currently represented by the Bangui-based anti-balaka coordination groups, whether under Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona or Maxime Mokom. In this context, a rapprochement is possible, especially for the Ndalé brothers, who have already found common ground with 3R on economic issues through the Bouar agreement of 15 December 2017 (see paras. 110–115 below).

80. When contacted by 3R representatives, the leadership of RJ/Sayo and RJ/Belangua accepted the idea of a meeting but refused to reconsider their positions on the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process. Although they complained that the delays in the implementation of that process left their fighters with no means of subsistence (see para. 92 below), RJ leaders continued to publicly express readiness to collaborate with the Government.[84] At the same time, leaders of both factions complained to the Panel that they had yet to receive any compensation from the Government in exchange for their commitment to disarm.

81. Even though MNLC leader "General" Ahmat Bahar still claimed to be committed to disarmament,[85] the looseness of the MNLC structure and its difficulties in establishing an effective supply chain resulted in the group's combatants going into survival mode, operating in an unpredictable manner and fuelling insecurity in the area.

82. MNLC is mostly composed of combatants formerly fighting in Darfur and enrolled through Ahmat Bahar's connections in the Sudan.[86] These fighters joined Bahar's group with the aim of generating revenue by replicating the model established by MPC in the Kaga Bandoro area, where the latter group has taken over the cattle business.

83. As cited in the Panel's 2018 midterm report, MNLC has aligned itself with FPRC (see S/2018/729, annex 7.1). In exchange for Bahar's support, Hissène committed himself to promoting MNLC interests in the political dialogue, especially regarding the integration of MNLC elements in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process and the issue of amnesty.[87]

[82] Meeting with RJ/Sayo and anti-balaka representatives, Bouar, 7 October 2018 and Bangui, 15 October 2018; meeting with RJ/Belanga representative, Bangui, 12 October 2018.

[83] Meeting with anti-balaka leader, Bouar, 8 October 2018; meeting with RJ/Sayo and RJ/Belangua representatives, Bangui, 14 October 2018 and 13 October 2018.

[84] Meeting with RJ/Belanga representative, Bangui, 12 and 14 October 2018; meeting with Sayo, Bangui, 15 October 2018.

[85] Confidential report, 29 October 2018.

[86] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 2 September 2018.

[87] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 16 October 2018.

B. Fragile stability and continuous human rights violations in Ouham-Pendé Prefecture

Displaced people returning home after the crisis

84. Clashes between RJ and MNLC in December 2017 and January 2018 (see S/2018/729, paras. 96–98) exposed the population living in the area of Paoua (Ouham-Pendé Prefecture) to a violent crisis. At first, between 27 and 31 December 2017, around 30,000 people fled to avoid RJ attacks on MNLC positions and sought refuge in Paoua. Then, between 1 and 10 January 2018, a second wave of around 35,000 civilians were forced to leave their homes because of violent retaliation by MNLC (see map in annex 5.1).[88] On 12 January 2018, MINUSCA launched "Operation Mbaranga" and created a weapon-free-zone of 50 km around Paoua. However, episodes of violence were still frequently reported until May 2018.[89] During the first half of 2018, Paoua became the largest internally displaced persons site in the country, hosting more than 60,000 civilians completely depending on humanitarian assistance.

85. Since June 2018, a slow but constant movement of return of the displaced population has been witnessed in the area. According to the Panel's findings,[90] while the establishment of 13 MINUSCA temporary bases and the joint MINUSCA-FACA patrols contributed to making people feel safer, the return was also triggered by the upcoming farming season. At the time of writing of the present report, only around 2,000 displaced people still lived in Paoua, in host families or community shelters.[91] Most of these people are from villages close to the Chadian border, where the security situation remains extremely volatile.[92]

Serious human rights violations committed by MNLC

86. In October 2018, the villages along the Betoko-Bebingui and the Bemal-Bembere axes (north of Paoua) were still empty and the population displaced in Betoko and Bemal, or Chad. Village chiefs along these axes – who were met by the Panel in Betoko and Bemal, respectively – described the area bordering Chad as a "no-man's-land" where raids were still perpetrated by ex-Séléka fighters, most likely belonging to MNLC, and uniformed elements referred to by the population as "Chadian soldiers".[93] The Panel could not confirm the identity of those uniformed elements. Despite some temporary returns, the continued presence of armed men in the area and the absence of MINUSCA-FACA bases along these axes prevent people from returning on a permanent basis.

87. For instance, in August 2018, residents of the Bedam area (a former MNLC stronghold) returned and started rebuilding their villages. However, on 23 September 2018, some local farmers were ambushed by ex-Séléka fighters en route to their fields. One man was shot at, and two young men were kidnapped during the attack; their bodies were found four days later in the bush.[94] Some direct witnesses of the incident recognized among the perpetrators at least one fighter belonging to MNLC and formerly based in the area. After the attack, the local population fled again, either to Betoko or Chad.

[88] Confidential report, 22 January 2018.
[89] Meeting with NGO representative, Paoua, 6 October 2018.
[90] Panel mission in Paoua area from 4 to 8 October 2018.
[91] Meeting with UNHCR representative, Paoua, 6 October 2018.
[92] Meeting with internally displaced persons, Paoua, 7 October 2018.
[93] Meeting with local chiefs and community representatives, Betoko and Bemal, 5 October 2018.
[94] Meeting with local chiefs, Betoko, 5 October 2018.

88. The recent crisis has intensified the back-and-forth movement of populations across the Chadian border.[95] According to the people interviewed by the Panel, both ex-Séléka fighters, most likely belonging to MNLC, and unidentified armed and uniformed elements were responsible for exactions and violence against those populations. Civilians are often illegally taxed, violently robbed or arbitrary detained.[96] In the absence of a trilateral agreement involving the Central African Republic, Chad and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), civilians were left without support when trying to cross the border and therefore extremely exposed to violence.[97] The threats against people going to Chad and refugees from the Central African Republic returning to their country led MINUSCA to escort civilians on the road between Bemal and Bembere once a week.[98]

89. Violence perpetrated by MNLC fighters in January 2018 was still vivid in people's memories. Villages and fields along the Paoua-Betoko and Paoua-Bemal axes were systematically burned by MNLC combatants as reprisals for the alleged support of local populations for RJ. According to information collected by the Panel, around 50 civilians, including women and children, were reportedly killed in and around the villages of Betoko, Bedam, Bemal and Beboura during that month.[99] As a result of the gross human rights and international humanitarian law violations committed by MNLC fighters, Muslim communities were forced to flee in fear of retaliation. For instance, Muslims from Bemal were still displaced in Chad.

90. Even though "Operation Mbaranga" weakened MNLC and forced its fighters to withdraw to the Ngaoundaye sub-prefecture, "General" Bahar's elements have continued to harass civilians and to hold illegal checkpoints, particularly targeting local traders travelling to and from Mbaiboum, Cameroon.[100] In September 2018, two NGOs were robbed in the south and west of Paoua, although it is unclear whether the acts were committed by MLNC or MPC combatants.[101] Also, on 5 October 2018, MNLC fighters opened fire on a MINUSCA patrol which then returned fire, making the assailants flee.[102]

91. Finally, on 26 October 2018, 10 ex-Séléka fighters, most likely belonging to MNLC, armed with one RPG-7 and six AK-47 rifles, opened fire against three FACA soldiers who were to be deployed in Bembere. The FACA elements fled into the bush, but one was taken hostage. On 28 October, the captured FACA soldier, ill-treated and without his AK-47 and ammunition, managed to escape.[103] Annex 5.2 provides a list of the other incidents involving MNLC.

RJ exactions and growing tensions with FACA

92. Despite the presence of MINUSCA and FACA personnel, the local population along the Paoua-Betoko axis informed the Panel of the continuous exactions perpetrated by RJ elements under the command of "General" Armel Sayo. Waiting for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation programme since August 2018, RJ fighters went into survival mode, hiding in the villages and harassing the population. They have continued to hold checkpoints that target locals and are removed when MINUSCA or NGO vehicles pass by. Some people also reported that

[95] The border between the Central African Republic and Chad has been closed since May 2014 (see S/2014/762, para. 42).
[96] Confidential report, 15 October 2018.
[97] Meeting with UNHCR representative, Paoua, 6 October 2018.
[98] Meeting with confidential source, Bemal, 5 October 2018.
[99] Meeting with local authorities in Betoko, Bemal and Beboura, 5 October 2018.
[100] Meeting with trader representative, Paoua, 7 October 2018.
[101] Confidential reports, 10 September and 2 October 2018.
[102] Confidential report, 8 October 2018.
[103] Confidential report, 29 October 2018.

RJ elements from Markounda and Bodjomo (Ouham Prefecture) have settled in the area after the return of the displaced population. Fearing retaliation, civilians were reluctant to denounce RJ elements responsible for the exactions to the national security forces.[104]

93. On 23 September 2018, RJ fighters were also involved in an incident with FACA soldiers in Benah 1 (25 km north of Paoua). This incident took place during a joint patrol in the northern area, which saw Cameroonian peacekeepers moving ahead of FACA elements during the return to Paoua. As confirmed by witnesses, the FACA soldiers were shot at by RJ elements while entering Benah 1. In response, they dismounted the vehicles and walked into the village looking for the attackers. Most of the villagers, frightened by the gunshots, had by then fled into the bush. The FACA soldiers shot dead a 25-year-old man who was fleeing and ill-treated an 18-year-old man. They also searched houses, confiscated three traditional weapons and arrested three people. An investigation undertaken after the incident seems to confirm that the victim killed was a civilian originally from Bodjomo with no connection to the local RJ.[105] Witnesses interviewed by the Panel confirm that the RJ elements shot first but considered the FACA response to be disproportionate.[106]

C. Siriri and cross-border trafficking in weapons and natural resources

Loose structure of Siriri

94. Siriri is a Fulani-dominated armed group created in late 2017 in the Mambéré-Kadéi Prefecture (see S/2018/729, para. 93 and annex 7.1). The group emerged in the context of the gradual return to Mambéré-Kadéi Prefecture of Fulanis who had found refuge in Cameroon in the early stages of the conflict. Siriri's creation came as a response to cases of theft of cattle belonging to the Fulanis by anti-balaka fighters, mainly those under the command of Nice Demowance in Amada-Gaza.

95. The group now consists of several local subgroups coordinating their positions. Local leaders are "Captain" Nbango and "Brigade Commander" Théophile (who replaced "General" Djibrila, killed by MINUSCA on 3 June 2018) in Noufou; and "General" Aba Baoro (also called "Ardo Abba") and "Colonel" Dogo in Dilapoko (see map in annex 5.3). Ardo Abba is often portrayed as the main military leader of the group, but his authority is contested, in particular by Théophile. Ardo Abba reportedly wanted to rally his force to Ali Darassa's UPC, but was unable to owing to the opposition of other Siriri leaders.[107] Fighters from the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC) of Abdoulaye Miskine were also reportedly observed in Gamboula.

Economic agenda of Siriri

96. Siriri's founders aimed at replicating the pattern initiated by Ali Darassa around Bambari (and also followed by 3R in the northwest), whereby armed groups take control of the cattle sector, thus generating significant revenues (see sect. VI below). Siriri recruited fighters from various prefectures, including former elements of UPC or FDPC, and established a severe system of taxation on cattle.[108]

[104] Meeting with confidential source, Bedaya, 5 October 2018.
[105] Confidential report, 8 October 2018.
[106] Meeting with confidential sources, Benah 1, 5 October 2018.
[107] Confidential document, received by the Panel on 27 September 2018.
[108] Meeting with confidential source, Gamboula, 21 September 2018. Confidential document, received by the Panel on 27 September 2018.

97. Owing to Siriri's unclear chain of command, the taxation policy has been implemented in a disorganized and often violent manner, as several small groups often tax the same herd and respond violently to any complaints.[109] Siriri also adopted a harsh system of penalties, regularly forcing herders to make additional donations of cattle. Those practices resulted in the departure of many herders from the area under Siriri's control, which led the group to explore new sources of income.[110]

98. To increase its racketeering opportunities, the group attempted to extend its area of influence towards the north, around Nguia-Bouar (see S/2018/729, annex 7.1), and towards the south, failing on several occasions to take control of Gamboula. The MINUSCA operation "Jinjet", which started in late April 2018, succeeded in containing Siriri's expansion so that the group's operations are now essentially limited to the Gamboula sub-prefecture (see map in annex 5.3). In an attempt to impede MINUSCA operations, Siriri has systematically been destroying the bridges on the Gamboula-Dilapoko and Nassole-Amada Gaza-Gbambia axes.[111]

99. Siriri's efforts to increase its area of operations were also aimed at generating new revenues through mining activities, as demonstrated by the racketeering of gold mining companies in the Abba sub-prefecture of Nana-Mambéré in January 2018 (see S/2018/729, paras. 102 and 103). Copying strategies of ex-Séléka factions (S/2018/729, paras. 85 and 86 and annexes 6.5 and 6.6), Siriri has also established an illegal taxation system enforced by mining brigades, with artisanal miners reportedly paying FCFA 40,000 to 50,000 per year. The system applies to sites along the Boumbé river (around Bania, Libala, Issa, Ndjol, Dilapoko and Banga-Boumbe), where gold and, to a lesser extent, diamonds are mined.[112] While populations previously working on the sites, mainly non-Muslims, had to depart, Siriri facilitated the arrival of miners, mainly Fulanis, from the Mbilé and Lolo refugee camps in Cameroon.[113]

100. Most, if not all of the artisanal production from the sites controlled by Siriri is then sold through illegal networks in Cameroon, mainly in Kentzou.[114] Smuggling is facilitated by the proximity of the border, some sites being literally on the boundary between the two countries (see annex 5.4).

Siriri's access to weapons and military material

101. Siriri is well-equipped with AK-type assault rifles, hunting rifles, military uniforms, bulletproof jackets, satellite phones and motorcycles. Fighters wear uniforms of various origins (see annex 5.5),[115] including uniforms of the Cameroonian Rapid Response Battalion, as observed by eyewitnesses.[116]

102. Since Siriri began operating in the area, there has been a rise in cross-border trafficking of small arms and ammunition, drugs and military material, as demonstrated by several recent seizures by internal security forces in Kentzou (see annex 5.5).[117] Traffickers based in Cameroon often travel on motorcycles and avoid

[109] Meeting with cattle herders' representative, Bangui, 15 October 2018. Meeting with ISF officer, Abba, 29 April 2018.

[110] Meeting with cattle herders' representative, Bangui, 15 October 2018.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Meetings with representative of the mining administration, Gamboula, 21 September 2018; meetings with collectors and artisanal miners, Gamboula and Kentzou (Cameroon), 21 and 22 September 2018.

[113] Meeting with a miner working from Dilapoko, 24 September 2018. Meeting with refugees' representative, Kentzou (Cameroon), 22 September 2018.

[114] Meetings with collectors and artisanal miners, Gamboula and Kentzou (Cameroon), 21 and 22 September 2018.

[115] Inspection of seized uniforms, Berberati, 24 September 2018.

[116] Meeting with five Siriri abductees, Gamboula, 21 September 2018.

[117] Meeting with internal security forces and local authorities, Kentzou (Cameroon), 23 September 2018.

the main axes, instead using transhumance routes along the Cameroonian border to enter the Central African Republic towards Noufou.

103. According to internal security forces and local authorities in Gamboula and Kentzou, as well as community leaders and refugee representatives in the border area, Hamidou Kossao, alias "Baba Sotao", a Fulani who lives in Kentzou, has been involved in the trafficking of arms and ammunition, food supplies and other equipment from Kentzou in Cameroon to Siriri's military base in Noufou.[118] This information was reportedly confirmed by Siriri elements.[119] Kossao is also in charge of facilitating contacts between herders and Siriri fighters supposed to protect them.[120] On 14 September 2018, Cameroonian authorities in Kentzou arrested Kossao as he was returning from Dilapoko to purchase goods and equipment for Siriri in Kentzou.[121] He was finally released for lack of evidence.[122] The Panel continues to investigate the role of Kossao and the reported involvement of some arms brokers based in Bangui, Garoua-Boulai and Bertoua (Cameroon).[123]

104. Further information on Siriri is included in paragraphs 127 to 135 below, as well as in annex 5.6, which addresses human rights violations committed by its fighters.

VI. Cattle and transhumance, a key dimension of the conflict

105. The cattle sector, traditionally essential to the economy of the Central African Republic (see annex 6.1 for background information), has been dramatically affected by the crisis, largely to the benefit of armed groups.

A. Cattle at the heart of armed groups' strategies

106. On 5 August 2018, when meeting in Moyenne-Sido to coordinate their views on political issues (see para. 30 above), ex-Séléka leaders Abdoulaye Hissène, Mahamat Al-Khatim and Ali Darassa also discussed matters related to livestock. They committed themselves to fighting against cattle theft in their areas of influence, especially along transhumance corridors. They decided to establish a "joint commission" to settle disputes between breeders and traders, as well as a "mixed FPRC-MPC-UPC brigade" to secure transhumance corridors (see annex 6.2).

107. This meeting followed a number of cases of cattle rustling close to the Central African Republic-Chad border, resulting in growing tensions in the area (see annex 6.3). On 20 June 2018, heavy fighting broke out in Ndélé (Bamingui-Bangoran Prefecture) between FPRC combatants and individuals suspected of cattle theft, resulting in a reported 20 deaths.[124] FPRC leaders claim that most of the acts of theft were perpetrated by "Arab foreign fighters", some loosely connected to MPC.[125]

108. It is unlikely that the decisions taken by ex-Séléka leaders in Moyenne-Sido, particularly the establishment of a joint force, will be implemented, each group being anxious to maintain exclusive control over areas under its influence. However, the Moyenne-Sido meeting demonstrated the ex-Séléka leaders' willingness to ensure

[118] Panel's mission to Kentzou, 23 September 2018.
[119] Meeting with gendarmerie, Berberati, 24 September 2018.
[120] Panel mission to Gamboula and Kentzou, 21–23 September 2018.
[121] Meeting with gendarmerie officers, Gamboula and Berberati, 23 and 24 September 2018. Meeting with sub-prefect, Gamboula, 21 September 2018.
[122] Meeting with local authorities, Kentzou (Cameroon), 22 September 2018.
[123] Confidential document, received by the Panel on 23 September 2018.
[124] Confidential reports, 21 and 25 June 2018.
[125] Meeting with armed group members, Ndélé, 24–25 July 2018.

that cattle herders can travel safely prior to the start of the transhumance season in October-November.

109. Previous agreements, such as those of Ippy (9 October 2017) and Bria (3 May 2018), had already demonstrated the importance of livestock in armed groups' strategies (see S/2017/1023, paras. 135–138 and S/2018/729, para. 76). By helping to restore freedom of movement on axes and transhumance corridors, these accords enabled armed groups to secure taxation opportunities, thus easing tensions among signatories, as was also the case of the Bouar agreement of 15 December 2017.

The Bouar agreement and its consequences

110. 3R and the anti-balaka group led by the Ndalé brothers concluded a peace agreement on 15 December 2017 (see S/2018/729 annex 7.1), under the authority of the Nana-Mambéré prefect and with MINUSCA support. The accord aimed to establish a ceasefire and ensure freedom of movement. The two armed groups also agreed to stop patrolling with weapons and to participate in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process. But in addition to being a peace accord, the Bouar agreement also aimed to promote the economic interests of both signatory groups. By establishing an unofficial sharing of territories between the groups, the agreement actually helped to normalize their relationship.

111. On 3 October 2018, a new ceasefire agreement was signed in Koui (Ouham Pendé Prefecture) by "General" Sidiki Abbass and Amadou Ndale. The signing of the accord, which aimed at facilitating the safe return of internally displaced persons who had left Koui in previous clashes (see annex 6.4), was concluded without support from any international actors, confirming the level of understanding that currently prevails between the two groups.

112. Elements of 3R operate in a territory located in the Bouar and Bocaranga sub-prefectures (in the Nana-Mambéré and Ouham-Pendé Prefectures, respectively). In spite of the commitments made in the Bouar agreement, they continue to conduct armed patrols and operations in this area, claiming that they need to protect their sphere of influence from armed groups active in neighbouring zones (MNLC and Siriri).[126]

113. The group controls the Degaulles cattle market and three other markets along the Degaulles-Ngaoui and Degaulles-Yamba axes.[127] 3R collects taxes on cattle sales (FCFA 6,000 in total per head), as well as on every shop open around a market (FCFA 1,000 per week).[128]

114. Around Mann (Baboua sub-prefecture), 3R members sold vaccines purchased in Cameroon to herders (FCFA 250 per dose).[129] Currently 3R accepts the presence of State representatives in its area of influence only when it can help the group to promote its economic interests. For instance, in September 2018, 3R requested the support of the Agence Nationale de Développement de l'Elevage to address health issues.[130]

115. In parallel, the Ndalé brothers' group continues to collect illegal taxes (FCFA 5,000 per head) in Yongo, north of Bouar, where all cattle need to pass to reach the Bouar market (see S/2017/1023 paras. 202–206).[131] The Ndalé brothers did not oppose the FACA deployment in Bouar because, though it forced their elements to adopt a lower profile (they are, for instance, now unarmed in Yongo), the FACA presence did not challenge their main sources of income. This further illustrates (see,

[126] Meeting with ISF officers, Bouar, 7 October 2018.
[127] Meeting with local authorities, Bouar, 8 October 2018.
[128] Meeting with herders' representative, Bangui, 15 October 2018.
[129] Confidential source, Bouar, 8 October 2018.
[130] Meeting with confidential source, Bouar 8 October 2018.
[131] Confidential source, Bangui, 15 October 2018.

for instance, S/2017/639, paras. 94–98) that, even in a territory with a strong State presence, anti-balaka groups may be able to collect taxes.

B. Cattle as a major source of revenue for armed groups

116. Armed groups can generate revenue from cattle in two ways: through illegal taxation or as cattle owners (and traders).

Illegal taxation of the cattle economy

117. For ex-Séléka groups, illegal taxation of cattle-related activities is part of a broader strategy of establishing parallel administration systems covering all economic sectors (see S/2018/729, paras. 82–86). Illegal tolls are also collected by other armed groups, including Siriri, 3R and some anti-balaka groups.

118. Three types of illegal taxes can be identified.[132] First, tolls are collected on transhumance activities, as discussed in paragraphs 127 to 135 below. Second, armed groups collect taxes on cattle markets, especially the two most important ones, Bambari and Kaga-Bandoro, under the control of UPC and MPC, respectively (see map in annex 6.5). In both cases, taxes are imposed, at a minimum, on the cattle traders (FCFA 5,000 per head) and the transporters boarding the cattle on their vehicles (FCFA 25,000 per head).[133]

119. Third, transporters are subject to tolls on the axes between the markets and Bangui, where most of the cattle are eventually slaughtered and consumed. Along the Oubangui river, for instance, boats transporting cattle from the smaller markets of Kouango and Mobaye pay tolls at checkpoints manned either by anti-balaka fighters under "Azous" (see S/2016/1032, paras. 150–152) or UPC combatants.[134]

120. Coupled with tolls collected by State agencies and national security and defence forces on several axes – including some illegal taxes, for instance in Ombella, along the Oubangui river[135] – the taxation systems of armed groups have resulted in a significant rise in the price of beef in Bangui.[136]

Armed group leaders as cattle owners: from racketeers to (unfair) traders

121. Mainly through racketeering, some armed group leaders have become major cattle owners. Estimates of the number of cattle held by Ali Darassa and Mahamat Al-Khatim reach up to several thousand head. This is in itself a significant source of wealth, as a head of cattle can be sold for FCFA 100,000 to 400,000 ($175–$700) in Bambari or Kaga-Bandoro.

122. These leaders can also maximize their revenues and that of cattle owners associated with them, whether through a selective application of taxes or by manipulating market supplies to ensure that prices remain high.

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[132] Peer Schouten and Soleil-Parfait Kalessopo, "The politics of pillage: the political economy of roadblocks in the Central African Republic" (International Peace Information Service, 6 December 2017).

[133] Panel's mission to Kaga-Bandoro (30 April–2 May 2018) and Bambari (30 April–2 May and 1–3 October 2018).

[134] Meeting with representative of the boat (« baleinières ») association, Bangui, 16 September 2018.

[135] Idem.

[136] In October 2015, the price of meat was 87 per cent higher than before the crisis; FAO/WFP, *Mission d'évaluation des récoltes et de la sécurité alimentaire en République Centrafricaine*, 1 Mars 2016, p. 42.

123. Unlike ex-Séléka leaders, anti-balaka fighters involved in cattle racketeering, for instance Nice Demowance in Amada-Gaza or the Ndalé brothers in Bouar (before they signed the Bouar agreement), do not keep the stolen cattle but sell them to traders or butchers locally. Some, like "Sossengué", a local anti-balaka leader in Ouaka Prefecture, also developed a business of smoked meat sold on Bangui's markets.[137]

124. The Panel also notes that cattle theft and racketeering are likely to increase with the elections of 2020–2021. As demonstrated during the 2016 elections, candidates often use gifts of cattle to populations as a campaign strategy. This results in an increase in cattle theft by armed groups at election time to meet the growing demand.[138]

Ex-Séléka groups as inevitable actors in the cattle economy

125. In 2016, a new unofficial market was created in Damara, Ombella-Mpoko Prefecture, 70 km north of Bangui (see map in annex 6.5), where taxes are collected by local authorities rather than an armed group.[139] The growth of this market is part of the process of restoration of State authority and is detrimental to the Bambari market controlled by UPC.[140] At the same time, it does not seriously undermine the capacity of UPC to generate revenue. The Damara market trades mainly in cattle from newly established Fulani herders having found refuge in the area, but even more importantly in cattle coming from Kaga-Bandoro and Bambari[141] – that is, cattle belonging to individuals paying taxes to armed groups, or even to leaders of those groups or their associates. A UPC member confirmed to the Panel that, while transiting from the Bambari area to Damara, cattle herders are obliged to pay taxes at several UPC checkpoints, in particular in Kouango.[142]

126. In fact, the influence of armed groups on the cattle economy is such that legal and illegal activities are today completely intertwined. All actors involved in the supply chain, whether herders, traders, transporters or State officials, have no choice but to cooperate with armed groups and ultimately contribute to their funding – at least indirectly.

C. UPC, 3R and Siriri: from "protectors" to oppressors of the Fulani community

127. Cattle are at the core of the strategy of most armed groups, including MLNC and MPC, as well as the Fulani-dominated UPC, 3R and Siriri. Most of the herders in the Central African Republic are from the Fulani community, which, as in other countries, is very diverse. Fulanis living in various areas traditionally fall under the authority of a local *lamido* (equivalent to a sultan; see note 75 above) and *ardo* (local chief/mayor). The emergence of Fulani-composed armed groups did not originate with the militarization of those traditional authorities; it was rather initiated by fighters external to those representation systems, whether from other regions of the Central African Republic or other countries. Those groups brand themselves as protectors and representatives of the Fulanis, but actually prey on them and their cattle business.

[137] Panel's mission to Bambari (19–24 January 2018).

[138] Meeting with representative of the Fédération nationale des éleveurs centrafricains, Bangui, 13 October 2018.

[139] Meeting with local authorities, Damara, 9 October 2018.

[140] According to the Ministry of Livestock, the percentage of cattle slaughtered in Bangui coming from Damara increased from 1 per cent in 2017 to 10 per cent in 2018. Figures for Bambari are 28 per cent (2017) and 15 per cent (2018); and for Kaga-Bandoro 61 per cent (2017) and 72 per cent (2018).

[141] Meeting with representatives of Fulanis and herders, Damara (Vangué market), 10 October 2018.

[142] Meeting with armed group member, 8 October 2018.

Weakening of traditional structures

128. Since the outset of the conflict, traditional authorities of the Fulani communities have been weakened by armed groups, which have taken over their sources of income. The main example is the replacement of the traditional "zakat" by what the armed groups call "sofal". "Zakat" refers to an Islamic obligation which, within the Fulani community, requires cattle owners to give a head of cattle each year to their traditional chief, who is then supposed to redistribute the cattle to poor people. Instead, the armed groups now collect the "sofal" ("to regroup" in the Fulani language), which obliges Fulanis to provide them with one head of cattle selected by the armed groups each time they consider it necessary for "the Fulani struggle".

129. While not systematically preventing traditional chiefs from collecting the "zakat", the armed groups may collect the "sofal" several times a year. In late August 2018, 3R started to collect the "sofal", allegedly to pay for a FCFA 17 million ($30,000) order of ammunition for AK-type assault rifles delivered by individuals crossing the Chadian border in the Ngaoundaye area (Ouham Pendé Prefecture).[143] UPC had resorted to the same strategy to support its war efforts in 2016–2017 (see S/2017/639, paras. 52–63).

130. The proliferation of such taxes represents a heavy burden on Fulani herders and cattle owners. It is all the more the case since these taxes are in addition to other tolls paid by the herders to all armed groups controlling a territory. For instance, every cattle owner crossing FPRC-controlled areas in Bamingui-Bangoran reportedly has to pay up to FCFA 120,000 ($200) per herd (S/2017/639, annex 5.1).

UPC, 3R and Siriri as successors to the Baba Ladé rebellion

131. The rise of armed group leader Ali Darassa is key to understanding the creation of UPC, 3R and Siriri and the way in which armed men took control of the Fulani community and its cattle business. Ali Darassa is the former second in command of the Front Pour le Redressement (FPR) of Baba Ladé, a rebel group, composed largely of Fulanis, that established itself in the Central African Republic. From 2008 to 2012, Baba Ladé confronted Idriss Deby, the President of Chad, and the activities of his group represented a major security issue in the northern regions of the Central African Republic for then-President François Bozizé. When Baba Ladé surrendered and departed to Chad in September 2012, Ali Darassa remained in the Central African Republic and joined the Séléka rebellion. When the Séléka entered Bangui in March 2013, he started to regroup former FPR fighters under his control and gain more influence within the coalition.

132. In the summer of 2013, Ali Darassa assumed control of Bambari and became increasingly independent, eventually creating his own armed group, UPC. To date, UPC is still composed primarily of former FPR members, including Ahmat Ali, UPC political coordinator, who was Baba Ladé's "chief of staff".[144] Hassan Bouba, a UPC political leader who is currently working as an adviser to President Touadera, is also the son of an FPR leader.

133. The armed groups 3R and Siriri are also largely composed of Fulani fighters who have imposed themselves as self-proclaimed Fulani leaders in their respective areas of operation. Both groups use the same networks as UPC for the supply of fighters and weapons, whether from the Sudan or Chad (see S/2018/729, annex 6.2). Both also have strong links with UPC and members of the former Baba Ladé rebellion. For example, Siriri recruited Abdelkader Ramadan, brother of Baba Ladé, to contribute to the reinforcement of the group's military capacities in weapons and

[143] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 15 October 2018.
[144] Meeting with UPC member, Bambari, 1 October 2018.

fighters through his contacts in Chad (see annex 5.5).[145] Finally, the circulation of fighters among the three groups is not uncommon.[146]

UPC, 3R and Siriri as violent economic entrepreneurs

134. The network of former FPR leaders follows a "business model" created by Ali Darassa's UPC in Ouaka Prefecture, which consists in taking advantage of the absence of State authority and the insecurity threatening the Fulanis to justify their activities and the taking over of the cattle economy.

135. UPC and 3R rarely formulate extensive political claims; they mainly request the creation of specialized units to protect herders and transhumance routes (see S/2017/1023, paras. 198–201 and S/2016/1032, para. 28). By integrating their men in those units, they hope to de facto legalize their control of the cattle business.

136. Further information on Siriri is presented in paragraphs 94 to 104 above.

D. Transhumance, a regional security issue

137. Seasonal cattle migration is a centuries-old practice in Central and West Africa whose intensity has gradually increased owing to the combined effects of demography, climate change and improved access to vaccines, among other factors. With 312,469 square kilometres of grazing land, the territory of the Central African Republic is central to the survival of livestock from the entire Central African region. Cattle herders bring livestock to the Central African Republic from Cameroon, Chad, the Sudan and South Sudan in particular.

138. Cross-border transhumance movements often constitute a source of tension owing to the traditional conflicts between farmers and herders and the activities of armed groups attempting to generate revenue from livestock. In the region, the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the countries most affected by such insecurity.[147] Unlike West Africa, where ECOWAS adopted a protocol on transhumance in 1998, the Central African region has only recently started a collective reflection on ways to address cross-border cattle migration.

139. At the ministerial meeting of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa held in Libreville on 3 and 4 March 2018, countries decided on the organization of a regional conference for the adoption of ECCAS regulations on transhumance in Central Africa.[148] Also, at the joint summit meeting held in Lomé on 30 July 2018, ECCAS and ECOWAS Heads of State and Government instructed ministers in charge of agriculture, livestock and security to hold regular consultations with a view to preventing and peacefully managing conflicts deriving from transhumance (see annex 6.6).

140. In its 2017 final report (see S/2017/1023, para. 256 (d)), the Panel recommended the strengthening of regional efforts to address transhumance-related issues. The Panel therefore welcomes the efforts by States of the Central African region to better manage transhumance activities at the regional level. However, the Panel is of the view that more targeted efforts in the realm of cooperation between Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad will need to be made. Prior to the crisis, a number of mechanisms and regular meetings had existed to facilitate coordination on the

[145] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 8 October 2018.

[146] Meeting with armed group member, 12 October 2018.

[147] Confidential document, received by the Panel on 31 October 2018.

[148] Final communiqué of the fifth ordinary session of the Council of Ministers of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, Libreville, 4 March 2018.

matter between the Central African Republic and its neighbours; they were, however, dismantled during the conflict (see recommendations in para. 210 (a) and (b) below).[149]

VII. Legal trade and illegal trafficking in diamonds and gold

A. Kimberley Process, diamonds trade and trafficking

141. At the 2018 intersessional meeting of the Kimberley Process (Antwerp, Belgium, 18–22 June 2018), the International Monitoring Team agreed to reduce the time frame for the approval of legal exports and to take decisions on the diamond shipments proposed by the authorities of the Central African Republic in an expeditious manner (within approximately one week). After months of downturn in legal exports (see S/2018/729, paras. 110 and 111), that decision facilitated a slight recovery of buying houses' activities as of the summer of 2018. Between January and September 2018, the Central African Republic exported 9,228 carats of rough diamonds from the five sub-prefectures declared compliant under the Kimberley Process.[150]

142. However, the pace of legal exports continues to remain largely below pre-crisis levels, with the large majority of the country's rough diamonds being illegally smuggled abroad. A December 2017 study estimated the current annual production of the Central African Republic (both legal and illegal) at about 330,000 carats.[151]

143. In the eastern Central African Republic, diamond trafficking continues to be a source of revenue for armed groups and their leaders (see paras. 74–76 above and S/2018/729, paras. 84–86). It is also the case in a limited number of sub-prefectures of the west, in particular Amada-Gaza and Gamboula (see paras. 99 and 100 above), both considered as non-compliant under the Kimberley Process, and where armed groups continue to have a presence at diamond-mining sites.

144. In other areas of the west, most of the diamonds are purchased by collectors, the majority of whom are licensed. As most offices of buying houses remain closed, those collectors then smuggle the goods mainly through Bangui international airport or Cameroon.[152] The fact that Cameroon's official diamond exports remain low (2,868 carats in 2017) indicates that only a very small fraction of diamonds from the Central African Republic enter Cameroon's legal trade; rather, smuggled goods transit through Cameroon towards other destinations.

145. Muslim collectors, who were forced to flee from the Central African Republic to eastern Cameroon at the beginning of the crisis, have served as key actors in the smuggling of diamonds from the Central African Republic.[153] Their gradual return to the Central African Republic (mainly Berbérati), as noted during the Panel's mission to Gamboula and Kentzou (21–23 September 2018), has contributed to reducing trafficking through Cameroon in favour of the Bangui route.

146. In Bouar and Gamboula, the Panel was informed that most diamonds sourced from those areas, which are non-compliant under the Kimberley Process, are sold to

[149] Meeting with representatives of the Fédération nationale des éleveurs centrafricains, Bangui, 31 July 2018.

[150] According to official data of the Central African Republic, the 2018 official exports amount to 75,969 carats. This includes the 66,737 carats stockpiled in previous years (when exports were suspended; see S/2018/729, annex 8.8).

[151] United States Geological Survey, "Artisanal and small-scale diamond mining assessment of the Central African Republic", report presented at the plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process, Brisbane, Australia, 11 December 2017.

[152] Meetings with artisanal miners and collectors, Berbérati, 20 and 24 September 2018.

[153] Partenariat Afrique Canada, *Du conflit à l'illégalité: cartographier le commerce des diamants de la République centrafricaine au Cameroun*, December 2016.

collectors based in the compliant zones of Berbérati and Carnot.[154] This creates a risk of contamination of diamonds from a non-compliant zone into the legal trade.

B. Involvement of presidential adviser Ousmane Mahamat Ousmane in diamond trafficking

147. Ousmane Mahamat Ousmane is a former Séléka military leader and a key political figure of the PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui, where he has often played a role of mediator between self-proclaimed self-defence groups. On 10 October 2017, as part of the President's reconciliation strategy, he was appointed Special Adviser to President Touadera.

148. A video released on social media on 21 August 2018 showed Mr. Ousmane marketing diamonds in his home (see annex 7.1). As a result, on 29 August, he was dismissed from his advisory position by the President. On 31 October, the Minister of Mines issued a press release (annex 7.2) stating that the special anti-fraud unit had opened an investigation into the case; the investigation has yet to yield any result.

149. Mr. Ousmane and the diamond collector appearing on the video, Adil Oumarou, told the Panel that the video had been recorded a few years ago and that the diamonds were not sold.[155] Visual elements appearing in the video confirmed, however, that it is much more recent. A number of sources informed the Panel that the video had been recorded in late July or early August 2018, prior to a trip of Mr. Ousmane to Cameroon, where he was supposed to meet with potential diamond buyers.[156]

150. Mr. Ousmane states in the video that the diamond lots include stones weighing up to 2.90 carats. He told the Panel that the lots' total value was between FCFA 16 million and 22 million ($30,000–38,500). The quality of the video does not allow for an accurate assessment, but experts on Central African Republic diamonds consider that Mr. Ousmane's assessment is most likely to be an underestimation.[157]

151. The origin of those undeclared diamonds is unclear. Mr. Ousmane and Mr. Oumarou told the Panel that they were sourced in western Central African Republic, in areas free of armed groups, but they have no documentation or evidence to prove their claim.

C. Gold: legal trade, trafficking and security issues

152. Gold production and legal exports continue to grow. From January to mid-September 2018, the Central African Republic legally exported approximately 100 kg of gold, almost as much as during the record year of 2017 (108 kg).[158]

153. Though there is no estimate of the total national production (both legal and illegal), it is clear that only a very small portion enters the legal trade. For instance,

[154] Meeting with collectors, Bouar, 26 and 28 March 2018; meeting with collectors, Gamboula, 21 September 2018.

[155] Meeting with Ousmane Mahamat Ousmane, Bangui, 15 September 2018; meeting with Adile Oumarou, Bangui, 16 September 2018.

[156] Meeting with confidential sources, Bangui, 3, 8 and 12 October. Telephone conversation with confidential sources, 19 October 2018. Contrary to allegations made on social media, Mr. Ousmane was never arrested in Cameroon.

[157] Meeting with diamonds experts, Bangui, 5 and 6 October 2018; correspondence with expert, 15 October 2018.

[158] Official data of the Central African Republic.

artisanally mined gold from some prefectures under the influence of armed groups, such as Bamingui-Bangoran, Ouham-Pendé or Ouaka, remains outside the State's control.

Gold mining companies: trafficking and security issues

154. Mining companies may also be involved in gold trafficking. On 24 July 2018, the Minister of Mines suspended the activities of the company HW Lepo in Gaga, close to Yaloké (Ombella-Mpoko Prefecture). The Minister blamed the company, which has an exploration permit only, for, inter alia, illegally mining gold by mechanical means (see annex 7.3). A note issued by the Ministers of Mines and Public Security on 26 June 2018 (annex 7.4) also noted the presence of armed elements at the mining site.[159]

155. The Minister's decision to suspend HW Lepo was taken in a context of discontent over the activities of a number of gold mining companies accused by local populations of damaging the environment, operating outside their permit zones, failing to provide compensation to artisanal miners who had previously worked at the sites, and other offences. For instance, the Minister of Mines told the Panel that a committee had been established to assess the damage to the environment caused by the company IMC in the Abba area (Nana-Mambéré Prefecture; see S/2018/729; paras. 102–104).[160]

156. On 4 October 2018, three Chinese employees of the gold mining company Africa Mine were killed and three others injured by an angry mob in Sosso-Nakombo (Mambéré-Kadéi Prefecture). The killings took place against a backdrop of strong tensions between locals and mining operators active in the area, including Chinese investors, as described in the Panel's 2017 final report (S/2017/1023, paras. 235–239). Thirteen individuals have been apprehended by internal security forces as part of their investigation into the murder of the Chinese employees (annex 7.5).

D. Gold: legal trade and funding of armed groups

157. Unlike diamond exports, which are regulated by the international Kimberley Process rules, gold exports have to date been subject to limited regulations in the Central African Republic. In particular, there are no restrictions on the export of gold from areas and sites controlled by armed groups.

158. As a result, legal trade in gold in the Central African Republic at times contributes, at least indirectly, to the financing of armed groups.[161] A significant part of the gold legally exported from the Central African Republic originates from the Bossangoa area, where armed elements (anti-balaka or former anti-balaka fighters) continue to be present at mining sites (see S/2018/729, annex 7.6).[162] A gold exporting cooperative called Avenir de la RCA, based in Bambari, purchases gold at the mining sites of Agoudou-Manga and Ngakobo (Ouaka Prefecture),[163] where UPC collects taxes through a parallel illegal mining administration (see S/2018/729, paras. 85 and 86 and annex 6.6). Representatives of the Cooperative Minière du Parti Chrétien

[159] The issue of the use of armed elements, including anti-balaka fighters, by mining companies was discussed in the Panel's 2018 midterm report (S/2018/729, annex 7.5).

[160] Meeting with the Minister of Mines, Bangui, 11 October 2018.

[161] The Panel recalls that, pursuant to Security Council resolutions, support to armed groups through the exploitation of natural resources is a sanctionable act.

[162] Official data of the Central African Republic do not indicate the regional distribution of gold exports.

[163] Telephone conversation with Avenir de la RCA manager, 3 August 2018.

Démocrate also told the Panel that a small portion of the gold exported by their cooperative was purchased in Ngakobo.[164]

159. The Central African Republic was among the signatories of the 2006 Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region and participated in the development of subsequent tools, in particular the regional certification mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), aimed at breaking the link between the exploitation of natural resources (including gold) and the financing of armed groups.[165] However, these standards have yet to be integrated by the Central African Republic authorities into national legislation. While expressing their commitment to implement the ICGLR tools, officials from the Ministry of Mines told the Panel that the audits of mining sites required by the regional certification mechanism are difficult to conduct in the Central African Republic, where most mining activities are of artisanal nature and therefore very widespread.[166] Ministry officials also underlined that further restrictions on exports of minerals from the Central African Republic would affect the national economy at a time when revenues from gold exports are necessary to compensate for the difficulties faced by the diamond sector (see recommendation in para. 210 (c) below).

VIII. Cross-cutting human rights issues

A. Incitement to violence

160. Pronouncements inciting discrimination and hatred on an ethnic or religious basis are closely related to the cycles of intercommunal tensions and violence. That was the case during the April and May 2018 events in Bangui (see S/2018/729, paras. 57–60). This pattern reached a climax with a public statement published by the so-called League for the Defence of the Church (annex 8.1) following the murder of the General Vicar of Bambari, Firmin Gbagoua, by UPC soldiers on 29 June 2018, the last in a series of killings of priests by ex-Séléka fighters.[167] The statement was posted on 9 July 2018 on the Sango Ti Kodro website as well as on social media. It was retweeted 1,366 times and seen by 869 followers, of whom 245 approved the content.[168]

161. In the statement, the Government of the Central African Republic and Cardinal Nzapalainga were accused of having been passive while "priests, including parish, vicar and pastors, are systematically killed openly and before everybody's eyes". The statement directly incites to hatred and violence against the Muslim community. The statement requests "all Christians to join us and support the movement so that Muslims also feel endangered in the Central African Republic, especially in Bangui". It also makes a clear call for revenge: "Our priests, abbots and pastors will be avenged, whether the traitor politicians like it or not."

162. Considering the significant intercommunal tensions at the time of its publication, the likelihood of the statement by the League for the Defence of the Church fuelling acts of violence was extremely high. It was immediately condemned by the Central African Episcopal Conference, the High Commission on Communication of the Central African Republic and the Central African Media and Civil Society Group (see annex 8.2). The Sango Ti Kodro website is registered in Toulouse, France,

[164] Meeting with representatives of the Cooperative Minière, Bangui, 27 July 2018.

[165] For information on the regional certification mechanism, see http://icglr.org/images/ICGLR%20Certification%20Manual%20Final%20Nov%202011En.pdf.

[166] Meeting with officials from the Ministry of Mines, Bangui, 17 and 18 September 2018.

[167] Confidential report, 2 July 2018.

[168] Confidential report, 29 August 2018.

but the identity of the author(s) of the statement remains unclear. There is no information available on any religious association called League for the Defence of the Church, nor on its spokesperson, Nzapakéyé Francois, most likely a pseudonym.

163. During the summer of 2018, despite continuous tensions between self-proclaimed self-defence groups based in the PK5 neighbourhood (see paras. 35 and 36 above), Bangui returned to relative stability. Nevertheless, the drivers of a potential intercommunal conflict have not disappeared (see annex 8.3). In this context, any new episode of violence can trigger pronouncements inciting discrimination and violence, similar to the one made by the League for the Defence of the Church. The Panel welcomes the enhanced efforts made by MINUSCA, national authorities and some civil society organizations to monitor such pronouncements.[169]

B. Sexual and gender-based violence

164. In October 2018, a senior official of the Mixed Rapid Intervention and Repression Unit for Sexual Violence against Women and Children (Unité mixte d'intervention rapide et de répression des violences sexuelles faites aux femmes et aux enfants; see annex 8.4) told the Panel that "sexual violence is a common practice in the Central African Republic". Created by presidential decree in 2015, the Joint Rapid Response and Prevention Unit has only been operational since 14 June 2017 and is almost exclusively operating in Bangui. Despite limited human, logistical and financial resources, between June 2017 and June 2018, the psychosocial section of the Joint Rapid Response and Prevention Unit has received almost 200 cases of gender-based violence and 50 cases of sexual violence per month (see recommendations in para. 210 (d) below). In the same period, the investigation section completed 320 investigations of cases of sexual violence (10 of which were related to the conflict) and submitted them to the Bangui Criminal Court or to the Military Tribunal.[170]

165. However, only a few cases of sexual violence have moved to trial. Sometimes the victims lacked the required means to ensure a proper legal follow-up of their cases. On numerous occasions there was no trial for sexual violence because the office of the public prosecutor reclassified the case as mere indecent behaviour ("*attentat à la pudeur*"). This happens particularly when the victims are underage and under pressure from their families.[171]

166. In the Central African Republic, there are no official national data on sexual and gender-based violence, only compilations of the cases reported in humanitarian programmes.[172] The partial availability of data makes it difficult to draw accurate trends. However, among the national and international stakeholders met by the Panel,[173] there is a general consensus on the following points:

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[169] The "National Plan for the prevention of incitement to hatred and violence", drafted by the High Commission of Communication with MINUSCA support, was published on 30 June 2018.

[170] Meeting with senior officials of the Mixed Rapid Intervention and Repression Unit for Sexual Violence against Women and Children, Bangui, 9 and 12 October 2018.

[171] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 10 October 2018.

[172] Meeting with official of the United Nations Population Fund, Bangui, 12 October 2018. The last national survey dated back to January 2014, when the Minister of Social Affairs, National Solidarity and Gender Promotion published a "Survey of gender-based violence in the Central African Republic".

[173] In September and October 2018, the Panel met with 15 Bangui-based national and international stakeholders working on sexual and gender-based violence. Targeted investigations were also undertaken by the Panel during its missions in Ouham and Nana-Gribizi Prefectures (4–10 September 2018) and Ouham-Pendé Prefecture (4–8 October 2018).

(a) Women and girls are by far the primary victims of sexual violence, even though sexual violence against men and boys is increasingly reported;

(b) The reporting of non-conflict-related sexual violence has drastically increased in recent years, mainly as a result of increased sensitization;

(c) A high percentage of the reported cases of non-conflict-related sexual violence are committed within the community, mostly by family members or neighbours;

(d) Conflict-related sexual violence is largely underreported, mainly owing to fear of retaliation;

(e) A high percentage of the reported cases of conflict-related sexual violence occur in the country's outer regions, where victims are often assaulted by multiple and armed aggressors;

(f) Late reporting remains frequent owing to population movements and the lack of State representatives or international organizations in the outer regions.

167. Finally, efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence have also been made in the framework of measures to deal with sexual exploitation and abuse committed by United Nations personnel and employees of international and national non-governmental organizations. On 3 September 2018, in Bangui, MINUSCA, United Nations agencies and NGOs signed a protocol for information sharing and reporting of sexual exploitation and abuse allegations. This document clarifies the process for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse and reaffirms the need to prioritize assistance to victims, regardless of the investigation's outcome. Following the signature of the protocol, MINUSCA addressed new allegations of sexual abuse committed by Mauritanian peacekeepers against at least three minors in the southeast of the country.[174]

C. Attacks against health facilities

168. Since the beginning of the crisis, armed groups have not spared civilian facilities such hospitals, places of worship and schools. Attacks against health facilities represent a violation of international humanitarian law and are all the more damaging because civilians often take refuge in hospitals during periods of fighting. By attacking health centres, armed groups not only prevent the sick and wounded from getting medical care, they also violate one of the few places where the most vulnerable people still feel safe. In 2017, such attacks claimed at least 27 victims, including health care staff and patients. Since mid-2018, when the Panel reported violent incidents in Bangui and Bambari (see S/2018/729, paras. 56 and 92), several health centres have been ravaged by armed groups in the Mbrès and Bria areas (see paras. 65–67 above). Most of the attacks were perpetrated by ex-Séléka factions. Annex 8.5 contains additional information on these attacks.

D. Attacks against peacekeepers

169. Although the number of fatal casualties was lower than in 2017,[175] malicious attacks against peacekeepers continued to represent a worrisome trend in 2018. Between 1 January and 25 October 2018, the Panel collected information on six

[174] "MINUSCA takes action on reports of sexual abuse by peacekeepers", MINUSCA press release, 5 October 2018. Available from https://minusca.unmissions.org/en/minusca-takes-action-reports-sexual-abuse-peacekeepers (accessed on 2 November 2018).

[175] See https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/org1663.doc.htm (accessed on 2 November 2018).

deadly assaults and 60 other armed attacks.[176] Anti-balaka fighters were by far the main perpetrators, followed by MNLC and RJ elements. In 27 per cent of the cases, the attackers could not be identified.[177] The large majority of the attacks occurred in the east and south-east of the country, but peacekeepers have also been targeted nine times in the area of Paoua (see para. 90 above).[178] Annex 8.6 contains detailed information and graphics on the attacks against peacekeepers in that period.

170. The Panel has highlighted on several occasions the growing anti-MINUSCA sentiment in the south-east (see S/2017/1023, paras. 68–73 and 128). The ambush of a MINUSCA convoy in Yongofongo (20 km east of Bangassou, Mbomou Prefecture) on 8 May 2017 was the most striking of a series of attacks against peacekeepers perpetrated by local self-defence groups. That day, one Moroccan and four Cambodian peacekeepers were brutally killed, and eight others injured.

171. According to the Panel's investigations, Yvon Nzélété, alias "Kporo", an influential artisanal miner of Bangassou (see S/2017/1023, para. 98), had direct control over the principal perpetrators of the presumed war crimes committed in Yongofongo. During interrogation, a member of the Bangassou self-defence groups revealed that Crepin Wakanam, alias "Pino Pino" (see S/2017/1023, para. 82), who was the main perpetrator of the ambush in Yongofongo,[179] coordinated his actions with Yvon Nzélété. Also, Nzélété took on a crucial role in the recruitment, mobilization and coordination of the local fighters involved in the May 2017 attacks in the Bangassou area, as well as in the dissemination of violent and discriminatory discourses against Muslims (see S/2017/1023, paras. 88–91, 98 and 99).

172. While violence has decreased in Bangassou in 2018 (see S/2018/729, annex 3.2), the security situation in the surrounding areas remains extremely volatile[180] and peacekeepers continue to be targeted. Between 1 January and 25 October 2018, local anti-balaka and self-defence groups operating in Basse-Kotto and Mbomou Prefectures have opened fire 18 times on MINUSCA patrols or MINUSCA-escorted convoys. On two occasions, on 17 May and 23 August 2018, the attacks resulted in the death of a peacekeeper. The loose structure of anti-balaka groups operating in the area makes it very difficult to identify the direct instigators of these attacks.

IX. Sanctions implementation: arms embargo, asset freeze and travel ban

A. Arms embargo and national defence and security forces

173. The present section considers developments related to the implementation of the arms embargo by national authorities and their international partners, related decisions of the Sanctions Committee, such as exemptions to the arms embargo, and related developments concerning security sector reform.

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[176] Not including exchanges of fire during operations carried out by MINUSCA, nor attacks by stones or machetes, abductions, robberies, hostile behaviour and threats.

[177] Anti-balaka (27 cases), armed elements (16), RJ (4), MNLC (4), UPC (3), Siriri (3), FPRC (2), MPC (1).

[178] Mbomou (12 cases), Ouaka (11), Ouham-Pendé (9), Ouham (5), Nana-Gribizi (5), Basse-Kotto (5), Haute-Kotto (5), Mambere-Kadei (3), Bangui (3).

[179] Confidential report, 30 September 2017.

[180] On 17 July 2018, at 4 a.m., anti-balaka combatants from Gambo and Kembe attacked the village of Pombolo, Mbomou Prefecture. MINUSCA engaged in an exchange of fire for approximately three hours with the assailants, who subsequently fled into the bush. During the attack, one civilian was killed and 23 others wounded, and three peacekeepers were injured. The number of casualties among the anti-balaka fighters remains unknown. Confidential report, 18 July 2018.

National defence and security forces: training, recruitment, equipment and deployment

Training and recruitment

174. The European Union Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM) is currently training the amphibian battalion of FACA in Bangui. When this training is completed on 30 November 2018, the total number of FACA soldiers trained by EUTM since September 2016 will be approximately 4,155 (see annex 9.1). All trained battalions, as well as some of the 238 demobilized members of armed groups who have been integrated into the national army and subsequently trained by EUTM (see S/2018/729, para. 11), continue to be gradually redeployed in Bangui and beyond (see para. 179 below). On 30 July, the Council of the European Union extended the EUTM mandate until 19 September 2020 and expanded it to include training support for the internal security forces, among other activities.[181]

175. The 175 Russian instructors deployed for a period of one year to enable the national defence and security forces to properly handle weapons and ammunition delivered in January and February 2018 (see S/2018/729, paras. 20 and 21),[182] continue their activities in several locations (see para. 176 below and annex 9.2). The third and fourth training sessions, conducted in Berengo (Lobaye Prefecture), were completed on 4 August and 17 September, involving 400 and 158 FACA soldiers, respectively. The fifth training session, for 290 soldiers, will be completed on 28 November. FACA soldiers also continued to be trained in the Sudan, in the border town of Umm Rawq, a few kilometres from Am Dafok, where the tripartite force now has a military base (see S/2016/1032, para. 16).[183] Until April 2018, the presence of Russian instructors among the Presidential Guard was part of the training exercise (see S/2018/729, para. 12). Thereafter, the instructors were replaced by six Russian nationals[184] employed by the Central African private company "Sewa Security" and equipped with exempted weapons (see S/2018/729, para. 20), as requested by the Ministry of Defence of the Central African Republic,[185] to reinforce the President's security (see annex 9.3).[186]

176. Russian instructors are currently deployed in Bambari, Bangassou, Bangui, Berengo, Bouar, Dekoa, Paoua and Sibut, to ensure that weapons are handled properly and that the skills acquired during the training are applied correctly once deployed.[187] In May and October 2018, Russian instructors were also involved in transporting materiel from the Sudan into the territory of the Central African Republic for the construction of hospitals and vehicles, respectively (for the first convoy, see S/2018/729, para. 13). Between 29 October and early November, the second convoy travelled from Am Dafok through the towns of Birao, Ouadda and Bria, and was escorted by FPRC elements (see annex 9.2). Russian instructors continue to ensure the security of hospitals in Bria and Ouadda and the movement of hospital personnel

[181] Meeting with EUTM, Bangui, 28 September 2018.

[182] As of late October 2018, 65 per cent of the weapons and ammunition from the Russian Federation had reportedly been distributed to the armed and security forces. Communication with the presidential security adviser, 26 October 2018.

[183] Panel mission to Birao, 3–6 October 2018. Meeting with the presidential security adviser, Bangui, 7 August 2018.

[184] As confirmed by representatives of the Embassy of the Russian Federation and the Head of Presidential Security on 7 August, 27 September and 1 November 2018.

[185] Meeting with a representative of the Embassy of the Russian Federation, Bangui, 27 September 2018.

[186] Meeting and correspondence with presidential security adviser, Bangui, 7 August and 24 October 2018; meeting with a representative of the Embassy of the Russian Federation, Bangui, 9 August 2018.

[187] Letter from the Minister of Defence, Bangui, 9 August 2018.

in the area (see S/2018/729, para. 13). At the request of the Government of the Central African Republic, the Russian Federation is about to deploy 60 additional instructors,[188] as notified on 17 September 2018 to the Sanctions Committee. In that regard, the Committee stressed the importance of coordination with MINUSCA regarding the training of the Central African Republic security forces, in line with resolution 2399 (2018). The authorities of the Russian Federation confirmed that the activities of the 60 instructors would focus solely on assistance to the security forces of the Central African Republic in the context of security sector reform.[189]

177. The training of 1,023 new FACA soldiers is scheduled to begin in January 2019, most likely in Bouar, yet the recruitment procedure has been affected by significant delays. The recruitment of armed forces personnel is supposed to use quotas to ensure gender and geographic balance[190] in order to establish "an army which is young, multi-ethnic and representative of all national sensitivities".[191] Moreover, at the fifth meeting of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Repatriation-Security Sector Reform-National Reconciliation Strategic Committee, the President approved the Government's proposal to reserve 10 per cent of the new posts in the armed and security forces for former combatants who still have to be identified through the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process.[192] The recruitment plan foresees an overall number of 10,873 new recruits for the 2018–2021 period.[193]

178. The training of 500 newly recruited elements of the police and gendarmerie (which did not include former combatants; see S/2018/729, para. 14) was completed on 30 October 2018 with the support of MINUSCA. An additional 500 police and gendarme officers are scheduled to be recruited as of December 2018, with specific parameters applied to guarantee a better national representation and geographical balance than the first 500.[194] Also, a total of 102 police and 117 gendarmes have benefitted from training by Russian instructors in Berengo, as such training is a precondition for assigning them weapons prior to their deployment (see S/2018/729, para. 14).[195]

Deployment and equipment

179. With the support of MINUSCA – with whom FACA soldiers conduct joint patrols and jointly man checkpoints[196] – and most often accompanied by Russian instructors,[197] trained FACA personnel have gradually been deployed in Bambari, Bangassou, Dekoa, Grimari, Obo, Paoua and Sibut (see S/2018/729, para. 18). FACA soldiers have also been deployed to other areas such as Boali, Moungoumba, Bouar

[188] Ibid.

[189] Note verbale dated 28 August 2018 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Chair of the Committee, 28 August 2018.

[190] Meeting with EUTM, Bangui, 9 October 2018.

[191] Arrêté fixant les règles d'organisation technique du recrutement de la jeunesse citoyenne dans les forces armées centrafricaines, 2 October 2018.

[192] Meeting with EUTM, Bangui, 28 September 2018.

[193] Confidential report, 25 August 2018.

[194] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 6 October 2018.

[195] Communication with the presidential security adviser, 26 October 2018. The Directorate-General of the Police and the Gendarmerie gave other numbers, i.e. 225 and 127, respectively. Meeting with Director-General of the Gendarmerie, Bangui, 6 August 2018; telephone conversation with Director-General of Police, 25 October 2018.

[196] As witnessed by the Panel in Betokomia, Gadoulou and Bozoy (Ouham-Pendé) on 4 October 2018.

[197] As witnessed by the Panel in Paoua (mission of 4–7 October 2018), Bouar (mission of 5–8 October 2018) and Sibut (mission of 25 May 2018), among other locations.

or Umm Rawq, in the Sudan, without MINUSCA support (see map in annex 9.4).[198] These deployments are part of efforts to re-establish State authority and, in the case of Bouar, to create a garrison-based army throughout the country (see S/2017/1023, para. 19).[199]

180. FACA, which continues to be the main recipient of external donations (see S/2018/729, para. 17), has received weapons and ammunition from the Russian Federation and vehicles and other non-lethal equipment from the China, the United States, France and Belgium. All of these donations were exempted by, or notified to, the Sanctions Committee. Moreover, France announced the upcoming delivery of 1,400 additional AK-type assault rifles, as allowed under an exemption by the Committee on 26 February 2018.

181. Despite the strong opposition of ex-Séléka factions (see paras. 21–24 above), FACA deployments have been welcomed, and even requested, by many local communities.[200] Yet, FACA soldiers have been attacked on several occasions (see also S/2018/729, para. 19). For example, in Bangui's third district, a Goula FACA female officer who was part of the pilot project for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (see S/2018/729, para. 11) was killed by the self-proclaimed self-defence group of "Apo" on 2 June.[201] Armed groups elements also shot at FACA soldiers in two separate incidents in the north-west (see paras. 91 and 93 above). Last, even though there is general satisfaction regarding the levels of discipline among the deployed FACA units, a limited number of cases of misconduct and ill-treatment by individual FACA soldiers have been reported.[202] These cases are managed by the military hierarchy.[203]

182. Owing to a lack of equipment and logistics essential to an effective deployment throughout the country, most of the 3,232 police and gendarme officers – 85 per cent of the police and 75 per cent of the gendarmes – currently remain in Bangui (see map in annex 9.4).[204] The short- to mid-term objective is to (re)deploy 2,019 police and gendarme officers to 19 localities. Bouar, Paoua, Bambari and Bangassou are identified as priority deployment areas for 2018 and 2019.[205] Among other things, this would allow the internal security forces to support the FACA contingents already deployed.[206]

183. Deployed officers are often not adequately equipped (see S/2018/729, para. 16) and police and gendarmes are sometimes reluctant to assume their new posts given the lack of the most basic equipment (see also S/2017/1023, para. 16).[207] For example, while 103 police and gendarmes were effectively deployed in Bambari on 5 September 2018, others refused to go to Dekoa, Grimari and Koui without weapons and ammunition; they fear attacks such as that of 8 August in Bocaranga (Ouham-Pendé), where 50 armed men attacked the local gendarmerie.[208]

[198] See also S/2018/922, para. 20.

[199] National Defence Plan, 11 September 2017, p. 1–2.

[200] For example, on 9 August 2018, local leaders in Rafai requested the deployment of FACA and ISF. Confidential document, 10 August 2018.

[201] Confidential reports dated 2, 5 and 11 June 2018.

[202] Confidential reports dated 19 July, 20 September and 20 October 2018.

[203] See also report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2018/922), para. 21.

[204] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 6 October 2018. S/2018/922, para. 20.

[205] Report on the first meeting of the committee for coordination and follow-up of the reform of the internal security forces, 10 September 2018.

[206] Global plan for resizing and redeployment of the internal security forces, Bangui, 20 March 2018.

[207] Confidential document, 9 August 2018.

[208] Telephone conversation with the Director-General of Police, 25 October 2018. Confidential report, 9 and 20 August 2018.

184. The gendarmes received a total of 127 AK-type assault rifles and 73 pistols from the Russian Federation; the police received 97 AK-type assault rifles and 10 pistols.[209] Nevertheless, the support provided to the internal security forces[210] to date remains largely insufficient for them to become fully operational (see S/2018/729, para. 17 and annex 9.5).

B. Calls for the lifting of the arms embargo by national authorities and regional organizations

185. In 2017, calls from national actors to lift the arms embargo decreased in favour of calls for making the sanctions regime more flexible (see S/2017/1023, para. 25). The Panel notes that expressions of support by national authorities for a total lifting of the United Nations-imposed arms embargo have regained prominence in recent months. The President and most Government officials are of the view that a total lifting of all restrictions on the rearmament and training of national defence and security forces is necessary to solve the country's security crisis.[211]

186. At their joint summit meeting held in Lomé on 30 July 2018, ECOWAS and ECCAS also called for the lifting of the embargo on the Central African Republic (see annex 9.7).

187. The Panel notes that these calls come at a time when the supply of lethal and non-lethal material to the defence and security forces of the Central African Republic is at its highest level in the past five years, thus reinforcing the notion that the arms embargo does not prevent the rearmament of these forces. While deployed FACA and internal security forces have performed fairly well in most areas, the Panel reiterates that a careful monitoring and control of arms entering the country remains the best way to prevent further proliferation of weapons. This is all the more the case in that the existing storage capacities are not sufficient to absorb significant amounts of arms and ammunition.

188. Government of the Central African Republic representatives have on several occasions complained to the Panel about not being promptly informed of the decisions taken by the Sanctions Committee on exemption requests to the arms embargo.[212] The Panel notes that the lack of notification to the authorities of the Committee's decisions, which was discussed during the Chair's visit to the Central African Republic from 2 to 5 October 2018, at times creates misrepresentation of the Committee's work (see recommendation in para. 210 (e) below).

C. Inspection, storage and management of exempted weapons and ammunition

189. While recognizing that national defence and security forces do not yet have sufficient weapons and ammunition at their disposal for both training and full operationalization, the Panel stresses that management issues, in particular the inspection, storage and control of weapons, should be addressed as a matter of priority, especially in view of future deliveries (see also S/2015/936, paras. 46–51).

[209] Telephone conversations with the Director-General of the Gendarmerie and the Director-General of the Police, 25 October 2018.

[210] Gendarmerie and police also received 30,000 rounds of ammunition each from UNMAS for training purposes, under an exemption granted by the Sanctions Committee on 11 July 2018.

[211] Statement of President Touadera to the General Assembly, 26 September 2018 (annex 9.6).

[212] Meeting with Government representatives, Bangui, 8 August 2018.

190. First, there is an urgent need to establish a software programme for the management (inventory, attribution, distribution, control and tracing) of weapons. Second, storage capacity in Bangui and beyond should be increased (see S/2018/752, pp. 5–6). In particular, a central armoury and national ammunition depot should be built (see recommendation in para. 210 (f) below).[213] Third, additional training for weapons and ammunition storage facility management should be organized for all uniformed services.

191. The latest transfers of military equipment demonstrate the need for the authorities of the Central African Republic to adopt a protocol governing the verification and stockpile management of exempted military equipment (for details, see S/2018/729, annex 2.2). In this connection, the Panel welcomes ongoing efforts by the authorities, with MINUSCA support, to develop such a protocol, which should, according to the Panel, among other things, provide for the physical verification of weapons and ammunition upon arrival.

192. In September 2018, the delayed detailed inspection by the Ministry of Defence (with the participation of representatives of the Russian Federation and operational support and coordination of MINUSCA) of weaponry that arrived in January and February 2018 disclosed that the serial numbers of several weapons, as cited in the original list submitted to the Sanctions Committee, could not be found on the delivered weapons, and that the serial numbers of several weapons inspected on the ground were not part of the original list.[214] Also, since the majority of the weapons had already been distributed to trained FACA soldiers, police and gendarmes deployed across the territory of the Central African Republic, the serial numbers of many weapons could be verified only through a desk assessment of the files listing distributed weapons (see S/2018/729, annex 2.2).[215] A more timely inspection of future deliveries could guarantee, first, the physical inspection of all weapons and ammunition, and second, that adjustments to the original list are made if required.

D. Importation of pistols, hunting rifles and ammunition authorized by the Government of the Central African Republic in violation of the arms embargo

193. In 2017 and 2018, the Ministry of Territorial Administration issued documents allowing individuals to import pistols, hunting rifles and hunting ammunition to the national territory of the Central African Republic (see annex 9.8).

194. For example, on 22 and 29 May 2018, three merchants received authorization to import 200,000 rounds of hunting ammunition each (see annex 9.8).[216] Also, in 2016 the then-Minister of the Interior, Public Security and Territorial Administration, Jean-Serge Bokassa, had authorized 139 deputies, listed by name in the document, "to buy in local commerce or to introduce in the Central African Republic" one 9mm automatic pistol and one 12-calibre hunting rifle each (annex 9.8).[217]

195. From January to June 2018, 85 boxes with 500 rounds of hunting ammunition each, all authorized by the authorities of the Central African Republic, were delivered

[213] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 25 September 2018.

[214] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, September 2018. Confidential report, 26 September 2018.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Meetings with personnel of Customs and the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Bangui, 31 May, 16 and 18 June and 8 October 2018.

[217] The purpose of this authorization was to allow the deputies to purchase weapons to guarantee their personal protection. Meeting with personnel of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, Bangui, 18 June 2018.

at the custom services at Bangui's river port of Port Beach (first district). They were transported by boatmen from Zongo, the town facing Bangui on the other side of the Oubangui river, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and then picked up by merchants authorized to open and manage ammunition shops in Bangui and beyond (see annex 9.8). The merchants paid a tax of 8 per cent on the value of the ammunition upon arrival at Port Beach in Bangui.[218] Imports continued from July to October 2018, as witnessed by the Panel at Port Beach and demonstrated by tax documents (see annex 9.8).[219]

196. The Panel notes that all hunting ammunition imported from Zongo are from the Manufacture d'armes et de cartouches du Congo, based in Pointe Noire, Congo,[220] and that it still does not contain the necessary tracing information (see S/2018/729, paras. 108 and 109). The Panel also recalls that such ammunition is often used by anti-balaka fighters and self-defence groups during military operations (see para. 73 above).

197. On 13 January 2018, the Panel also observed hunting ammunition being openly sold in a shop in Nola, Sangha-Mbaéré Prefecture (see annex 9.9). The hunting ammunition produced in Italy and Spain, and legally sold to "ARICAM" in Douala, Cameroon,[221] is of recent manufacture (one of the boxes indicates 22 May 2017 as production date) and was therefore brought into the Central African Republic in violation of the arms embargo. It is unclear how these munitions entered the country. Similar types of ammunition were found by rangers in the Dzanga Sangha Special Reserve, demonstrating that they are used by individuals involved in hunting and poaching, including of protected species such as buffalo and monkeys.[222]

198. On 4 and 18 June 2018, the Panel informed the national authorities that, pursuant to Security Council resolutions and unless exempted by a decision of the Sanctions Committee, the issuing of permits for the import of hunting ammunition, pistols and weapons constitutes a violation of the arms embargo. Thereupon, the Director-General of the Territorial Administration reportedly suspended the distribution of new import licenses.[223] The Panel continues to cooperate with the national authorities on this issue, including on the possibility of introducing exemption requests, and to follow up on the non-exempted imports of lethal equipment (see recommendations in para. 210 (g) and (h)).

E. Travel ban violations

Travel ban violations by ex-Séléka leaders

199. Ex-Séléka leaders and listed individuals Nourredine Adam and Abdoulaye Hissène violated the travel ban to participate in the Khartoum meeting of 27–28 August 2018, co-organized by the Governments of the Russian Federation and the Sudan, with the endorsement of the Government of the Central African Republic (see para. 16 above). Abdoulaye Hissène was transported on 28 August 2018 by an aircraft from the company Lapara (with tail number TL-AER) from Kaga-Bandoro, in the Central African Republic, to Nyala, Sudan, where Nourredine Adam was already present. The same day, both were then transported by the same plane from Nyala to Khartoum. On 31 August, both sanctioned individuals travelled back from Khartoum

[218] Ibid. Documents obtained by the Panel on 18 June 2018.
[219] Panel's visit to Port Beach, Bangui, 8 October.
[220] Ibid. Meeting with owner of hunting ammunition shop, Bangui, 7 October 2018.
[221] Letter to the Panel from "Trust", 7 March 2018. Letter to the Panel from "Clever", 14 March 2018.
[222] Elephants are shot by poachers using ammunition of higher calibre.
[223] Meeting with the Director-General of the Territorial Administration, Bangui, 8 October 2018.

to Nyala on the same aircraft. While Mr. Adam reportedly remained in Nyala, Mr. Hissène was then transported back to Kaga-Bandoro on the same day and using the same aircraft.[224] In a communication dated 8 September 2018, the manager of Lapara informed the Panel that the invoice for the transport services was paid by the Central African company Lobaye Invest.

200. The presence of Nourredine Adam was also reported in the Sudan in mid-July 2018, in connection with his participation in a prior reconciliation meeting which was supposed to be held in Khartoum (see para. 15 above), and again in late September–October. His presence was also reported in Chad in late July and late August–early September 2018.[225]

201. The Panel wrote official letters to the Governments of Chad, the Sudan and the Russian Federation to recall that, pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 2399 (2018), listed individuals can travel in some circumstances, including when the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that an exemption would further the objectives of peace and national reconciliation in the Central African Republic. The Panel encourages all Member States to make use of this exemption provision (see recommendation in para. 210 (i) below).

Update on travel ban violations by François Bozizé

202. The Panel has yet to receive a response from the Government of South Sudan regarding the use of a South Sudanese diplomatic passport by listed individual and former President François Bozizé (see S/2018/729, paras. 25–29). The Panel had requested information through an official letter on 8 February 2018 and discussed the issue in a meeting with the Permanent Representative of South Sudan to the United Nations in New York on 18 July 2018.

F. Lack of implementation of the asset freeze by national authorities of the Central African Republic

203. On 31 July 2018, Prime Minister Simplice Sarandji told the Panel that he would approach the Minister of Justice and ensure that the latter would take appropriate action to implement the asset freeze on listed individuals and entities. On 11 October 2018, the Panel provided the Ministry of Justice with all required information to facilitate such action. At the time of writing of the present report, however, no decision had been taken, whether by the Minister of Justice or any other authorities on this issue, leaving the Central African Republic authorities in violation of Security Council resolutions.

204. As a consequence, the asset freeze remains implemented by banking institutions of the Central African Republic in an inconsistent manner. While accounts of a few sanctioned individuals or entities, such as the Bureau d'achat de diamant en Centrafrique/Kardiam (Badica), are frozen, others continue to use their accounts and even receive a salary from national authorities. This is the case of former anti-balaka leaders Alfred Yékatom, Habib Soussou and Eugène Ngaïkosset.

205. In communications of 15 and 22 October 2018, the Banque sahélo-saharienne pour l'investissement et le commerce (BSIC) in Bangui confirmed that Alfred Yékatom and Habib Soussou continued to receive their salaries as a member of Parliament and FACA officer, respectively, through their BSIC accounts. BSIC also

[224] Confidential reports, 29 August and 1 September 2018.

[225] Meeting with armed group members, Ndélé, 25 July and Bangui, 14 October 2018; meetings with confidential diplomatic sources, 27 and 31 July 2018.

informed the Panel that the freezing of their accounts could be effected only upon request of the Bangui Public Prosecutor.

206. It is unclear where Eugène Ngaïkosset, who continues to be paid as a FACA officer,[226] now receives his salary. On 11 October 2018, Ecobank decided to freeze his account (see S/2016/1032, para. 46).[227] At the time, the account was in debit and was no longer receiving Mr. Ngaïkosset's salary.

Information on listed individuals Habib Soussou and Alfred Yékatom

207. On 29 October 2018, on the day of the election of Laurent Ngon-Baba as President of the National Assembly, Alfred Yékatom fired a handgun inside the premises of the National Assembly. According to eyewitnesses, he had threatened to shoot a fellow member of Parliament and later shot in the air as he was being arrested by gendarme and FACA officers.[228] He was then put in detention at Camp de Roux. In its 2016 final report (S/2016/1032, para. 100), the Panel provided information on Alfred Yékatom's weaponry.

208. On 1 June 2018, Habib Soussou was promoted by decree of the Minister of Defence from the rank of corporal to master-corporal (see annex 9.10).

G. Update on assets of Abdoulaye Hissène

209. In its 2017 midterm and final reports (S/2017/639, para. 44, and S/2016/1032, paras. 39–45), the Panel provided information on Abdoulaye Hissène's business activities in Chad and an attempted oil deal between Abi Tchad, a company co-managed by Mr. Hissène, and the company Mezcor in late 2014–2015. As detailed in annex 9.11, information collected by the Panel to date indicates that, though no oil transaction was apparently conducted, several financial transfers were made, contributing to the personal enrichment of Mr. Hissène and his business associates.

H. Recommendations

210. The Panel recommends that the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic:

(a) Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic and regional and international partners involved in the political process to put the issue of cattle and transhumance on the agenda of all meetings aiming at peace and reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and to take into account the experience and points of view of representatives of herders (see sect. VI above);

(b) Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic and relevant regional countries and international partners to reactivate bilateral and trilateral cooperation frameworks for the management of cross-border transhumance which had existed before the crisis (see para. 140 above);

(c) Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic to strengthen its efforts to prevent the legal trade of gold from contributing to the funding of armed groups, and in this connection (see paras. 157–159 above):

(i) Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic to take measures to prevent operators of the Central African Republic gold-mining

[226] Correspondence with confidential source, 5 October 2018.
[227] Meeting with Ecobank representative, Bangui, 11 October 2018.
[228] Correspondence with confidential source, 29 and 30 October 2018.

sector from contributing, even indirectly, to the funding of armed groups through their activities;

(ii) Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic to strengthen its efforts to implement the ICGLR tools established to address the link between the exploitation of natural resources (including gold) and armed conflict, in particular the regional certification mechanism;

(iii) Encourage relevant international partners to provide support to authorities of the Central African Republic to implement the ICGLR tools;

(d) Encourage the Government and relevant international partners to strengthen efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence (see paras. 164–167 above), and notably:

(i) To strengthen the capacity of the Mixed Rapid Intervention and Repression Unit for Sexual Violence against Women and Children for intervention and investigation in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as the provision of medical, psychosocial and legal support to the victims, in particular by completing the legal framework of the Unit, issuing the decrees nominating its key personnel and allocating a national budget;

(ii) To improve first-aid medical and psychosocial assistance to victims, in particular by including a sexual and gender-based violence component in the existing humanitarian mechanisms of response to emergencies, especially in case of conflict;

(e) Establish a procedure of systematic notification to the Government of the Central African Republic and other concerned parties of its decisions on requests for exemptions to the arms embargo, including in case of holds (see para. 188 above);

(f) Encourage the national authorities, in cooperation with MINUSCA, to proceed with the construction of facilities for the storage of weapons and ammunition, in particular a central armoury and national ammunition depot, for the national defence and security forces (see para. 190 above);

(g) Remind the Government of the Central African Republic that imports of pistols, hunting ammunition and weapons require a decision of exemption by the Committee (see paras. 193–198 above);

(h) Urge the national authorities to take measures to suspend imports of hunting ammunition and weapons and report to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic on the actions taken (see paras. 193–198 above);

(i) Remind Member States and regional organizations that, pursuant to paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 2399 (2018), listed individuals can travel in some circumstances, including when the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that an exemption would further the objectives of peace and national reconciliation in the Central African Republic, and encourage them, when relevant, to make use of this exemption possibility (see para. 201 above).

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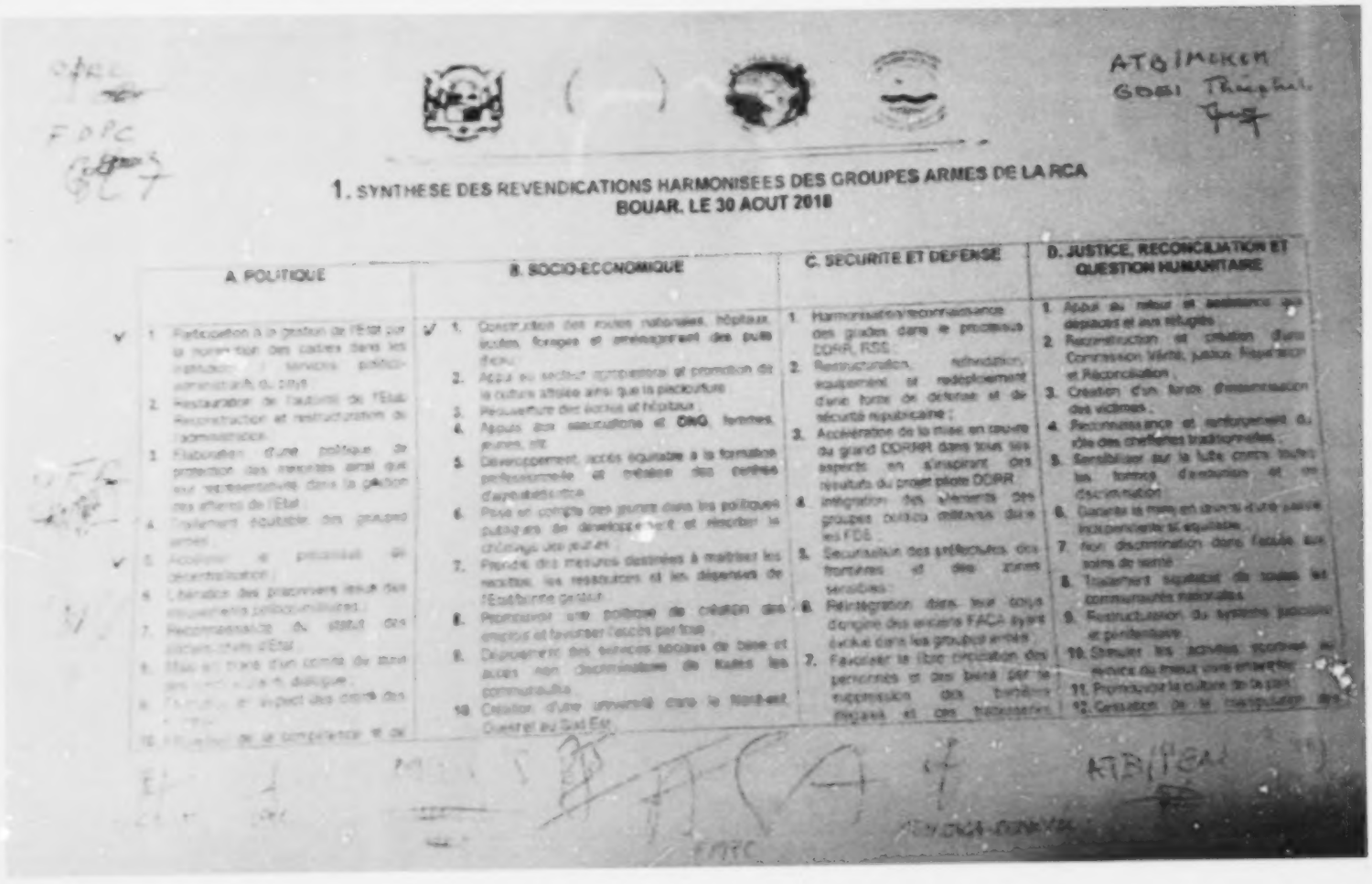
Asky	1			1	
Belgium	1	1			
Benin	1	1			
BPMC	2			2	
BSIC	4	4			
Cameroon	1	1			
CBCA	1			1	
Chad	2			2	
China	1	1			
Clever	1	1			
Committee/Chair	4				
DRC	2	1		1	
Ecobank	1				1
Ethiopia	1		1		
Ethiopian Airlines	2	1			
PSC	1			1	
Kenya	2	1		1	
Kenya Airways	1			1	
Lapara	1	1			
Lobaye Invest	1			1	
Nigeria	2	2			
Republic of Congo	2	1			
Russian Federation	5	5			
Rwanda Air	1			1	
South Africa	1			1	
South Sudan	1			1	
Sudan	2			2	
Switzerland	2	2			
Tunis	1		1		
Trust	1	1			
UAE	1			1	
Uganda	1	1			

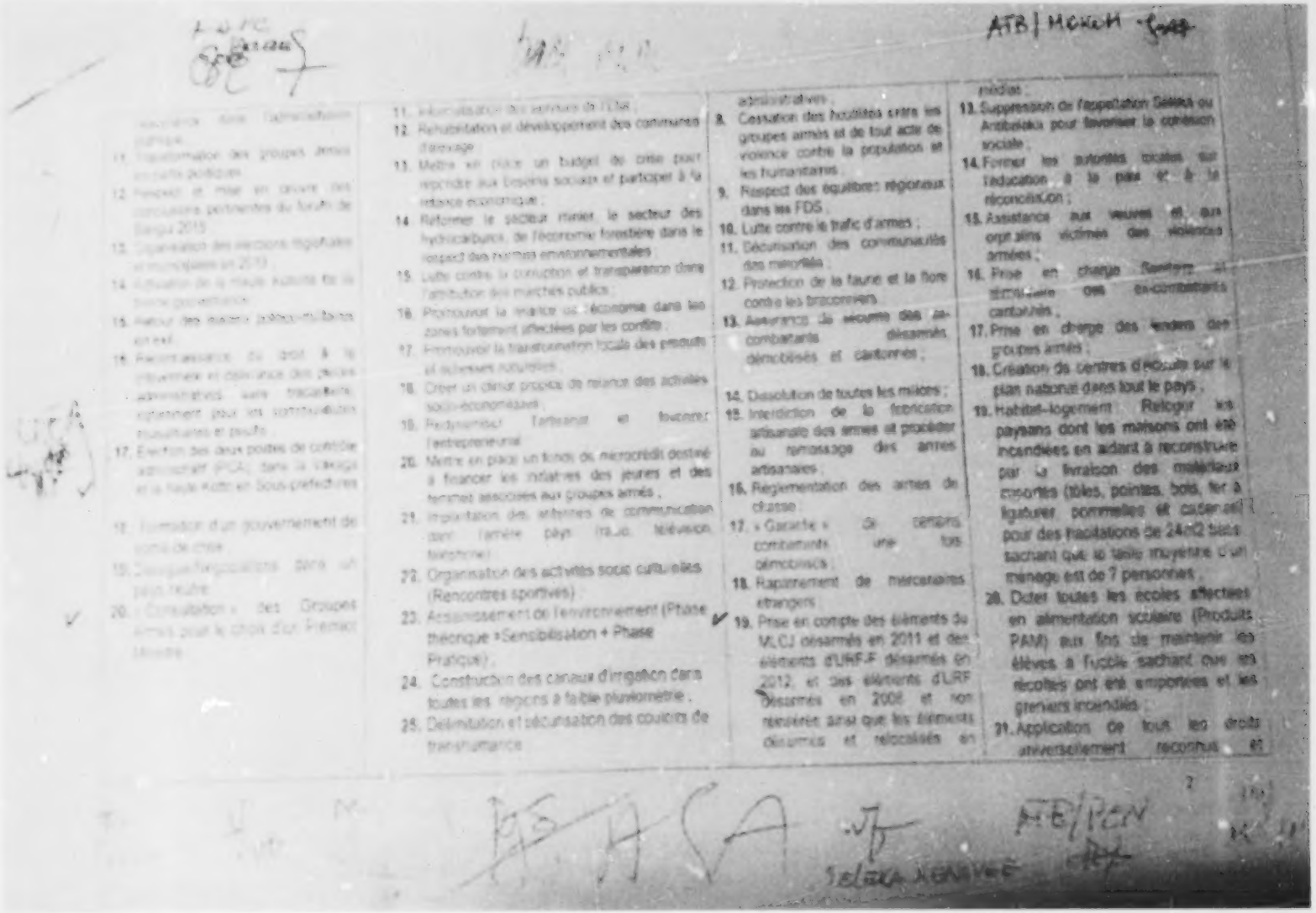
Annex 2.1: Document signed by armed groups in Bouar, "Synthèse des Revendications Harmonisées des Groupes Armées de la RCA" dated 30 August 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 2 September 2018.

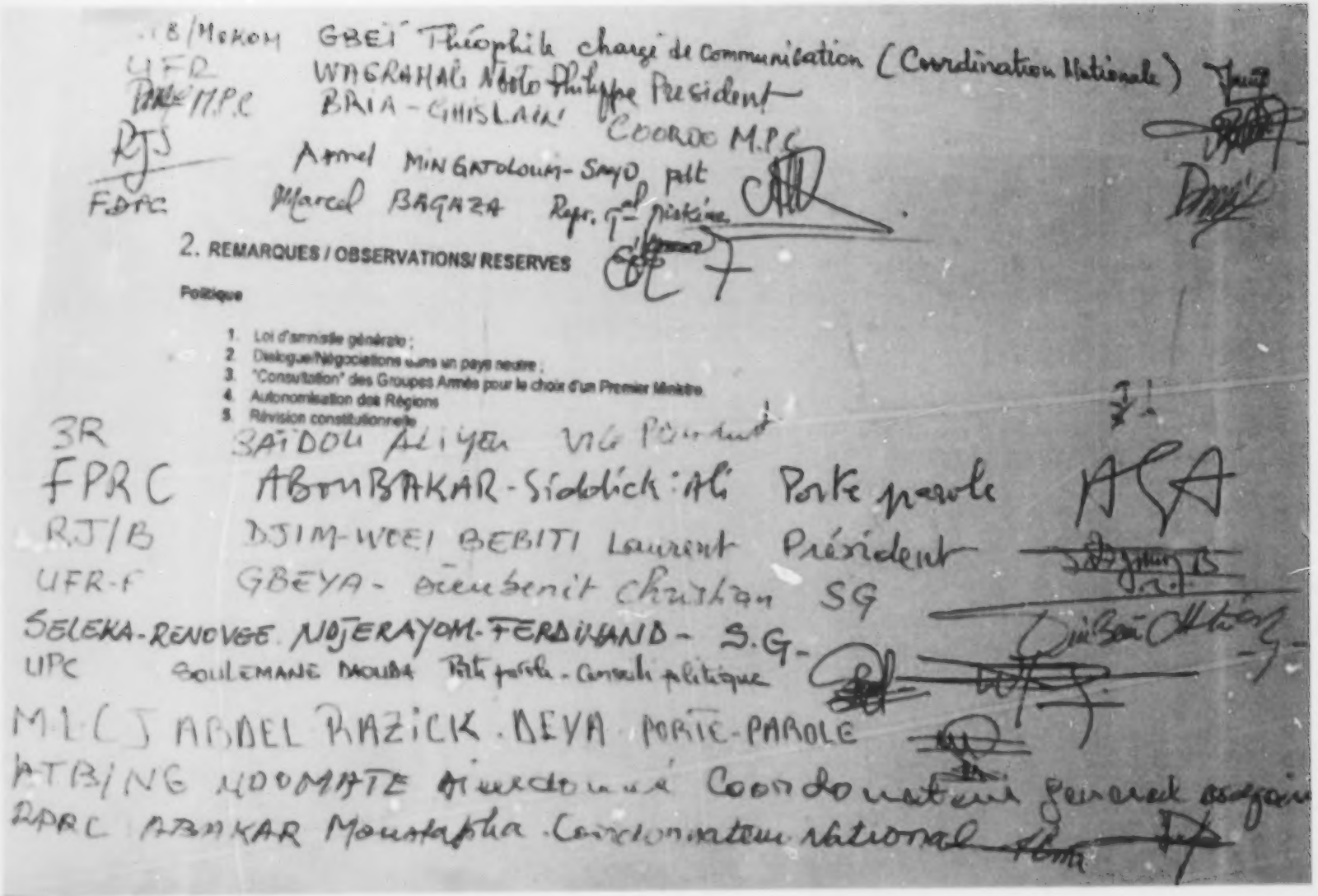


1. SYNTHESE DES REVENDICATIONS HARMONISEES DES GROUPES ARMES DE LA RCA
BOUAR, LE 30 AOUT 2018

A. POLITIQUE	B. SOCIO-ECONOMIQUE	C. SECURITE ET DEFENSE	D. JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION ET QUESTION HUMANITAIRE
1. Participation à la gestion de l'Etat par la représentation des cadres dans les institutions / services politico-administratifs du pays ; 2. Restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat, Reconstruction et restructuration de l'administration ; 3. Elaboration d'une politique de protection des ressources ainsi que leur représentativité dans la gestion des affaires de l'Etat ; 4. Traitement équitable des groupes armés ; 5. Accélérer le processus de décentralisation ; 6. Libération des prisonniers selon des mécanismes préalablement définis ; 7. Reconnaissance du statut des ex-combattants d'Etat ; 8. Mise en place d'un comité de suivi des accords de Khartoum ; 9. Application et respect des droits des [illegible] ; 10. [illegible] de la compétence et de	1. Construction des routes nationales, hôpitaux, écoles, forages et aménagement des puits d'eau ; 2. Appui au secteur compétences et promotion de la culture agricole ainsi que la pisciculture ; 3. Réouverture des écoles et hôpitaux ; 4. Appuis aux associations et ONG femmes, jeunes, etc ; 5. Développement, accès équitable à la formation professionnelle et création des centres d'apprentissage ; 6. Prise en compte des jeunes dans les politiques publiques de développement et résorber le chômage des jeunes ; 7. Prendre des mesures destinées à maîtriser les recettes, les ressources et les dépenses de l'Etat/bonne gestion ; 8. Promouvoir une politique de création des emplois et favoriser l'accès par tous ; 9. Déploiement des services sociaux de base et accès non discriminatoire de toutes les communautés ; 10. Création d'une université dans le Nord-est Ouest et au Sud-Est.	1. Harmonisation/reconnaissance des grades dans le processus DDRR, RSS ; 2. Restructuration, refondation, équipement et redéploiement d'une force de défense et de sécurité républicaine ; 3. Accélération de la mise en œuvre du grand DDRRR dans tous les aspects en s'inspirant des résultats du projet pilote DDRR ; 4. Intégration des éléments des groupes armés/ex militaires dans les FDS ; 5. Sécurisation des préfectures, des frontières et des zones sensibles ; 6. Réintégration dans leur corps d'origine des anciens FACA ayant évolué dans les groupes armés ; 7. Faciliter le libre circulation des personnes et des biens par la suppression des barrières illégales et des harcèlements	1. Appui au retour et assistance aux déplacés et aux réfugiés ; 2. Reconstruction et création d'une Commission Vérité, justice Réparation et Réconciliation ; 3. Création d'un fonds d'indemnisation des victimes ; 4. Reconnaissance et renforcement du rôle des chefferies traditionnelles ; 5. Sensibiliser sur la lutte contre toutes les formes d'exclusion et de discrimination ; 6. Garantir la mise en œuvre d'une justice indépendante et équitable ; 7. Non discrimination dans l'accès aux soins de santé ; 8. Traitement égalitaire de toutes les communautés nationales ; 9. Restructuration du système pénitentiaire et pénitentiaire ; 10. Stimuler les activités sportives en vue d'un meilleur vivre ensemble ; 11. Promouvoir la culture de la paix ; 12. Cessation de la manipulation des



8. Cessation des hostilités entre les groupes armés et de tout acte de violence contre la population et les humanitaires ;
9. Respect des équilibre régionaux dans les FDS ;
10. Lutte contre le trafic d'armes ;
11. Décrispation des communautés des minorités ;
12. Protection de la faune et la flore contre les braconniers ;
13. Assurance de sécurité des ex-combattants désarmés démobilisés et cantonnés ;
14. Dissolution de toutes les milices ;
15. Interdiction de la fabrication artisanale des armes et procéder au ramassage des armes artisanales ;
16. Réglementation des armes de chasse ;
17. « Garantie » de certains combattants une fois démobilisés ;
18. Rapatriement de mercenaires étrangers ;
19. Prise en compte des éléments du VLCJ désarmés en 2011 et des éléments d'URF-F désarmés en 2012, et des éléments d'LRF désarmés en 2008 et non réintégrés ainsi que les éléments désarmés et relocalisés en médiat ;
13. Suppression de l'appellation Séléka ou Antibalaka pour favoriser la cohésion sociale ;
14. Former les autorités locales sur l'éducation à la paix et à la réconciliation ;
15. Assistance aux veuves et aux orphelins victimes des violences armées ;
16. Prise en charge financière et matérielle des ex-combattants cantonnés ;
17. Prise en charge des leaders des groupes armés ;
18. Création de centres d'accueil sur le plan national dans tout le pays ;
19. Habitat-logement : Reloger les paysans dont les maisons ont été incendiées en aidant à reconstruire par la livraison des matériaux essentiels (tôles, pointes, bois, fer à ligaturer pommelles et ciment) pour des habitations de 24m2 sachant que la taille moyenne d'un ménage est de 7 personnes ;
20. Doter toutes les écoles affectées en alimentation scolaire (Produits PAM) aux fins de maintenir les élèves à l'école sachant que les récoltes ont été emportées et les greniers incendiés ;
21. Application de tout les droits universellement reconnus et



.../8/MOKOM GBEÏ Théophile chargé de communication (Coordination Nationale)
UFR WAGRAHALI Abdoulaye Philippe Président
M.P.C BRIA-GHISLAIN COORDO M.P.C
RJ/S Ahmed MINGATOLOUM-SAYO Pdt
FDPC Marcel BAGAZA Repr. Pdt National

2. REMARQUES / OBSERVATIONS/ RESERVES

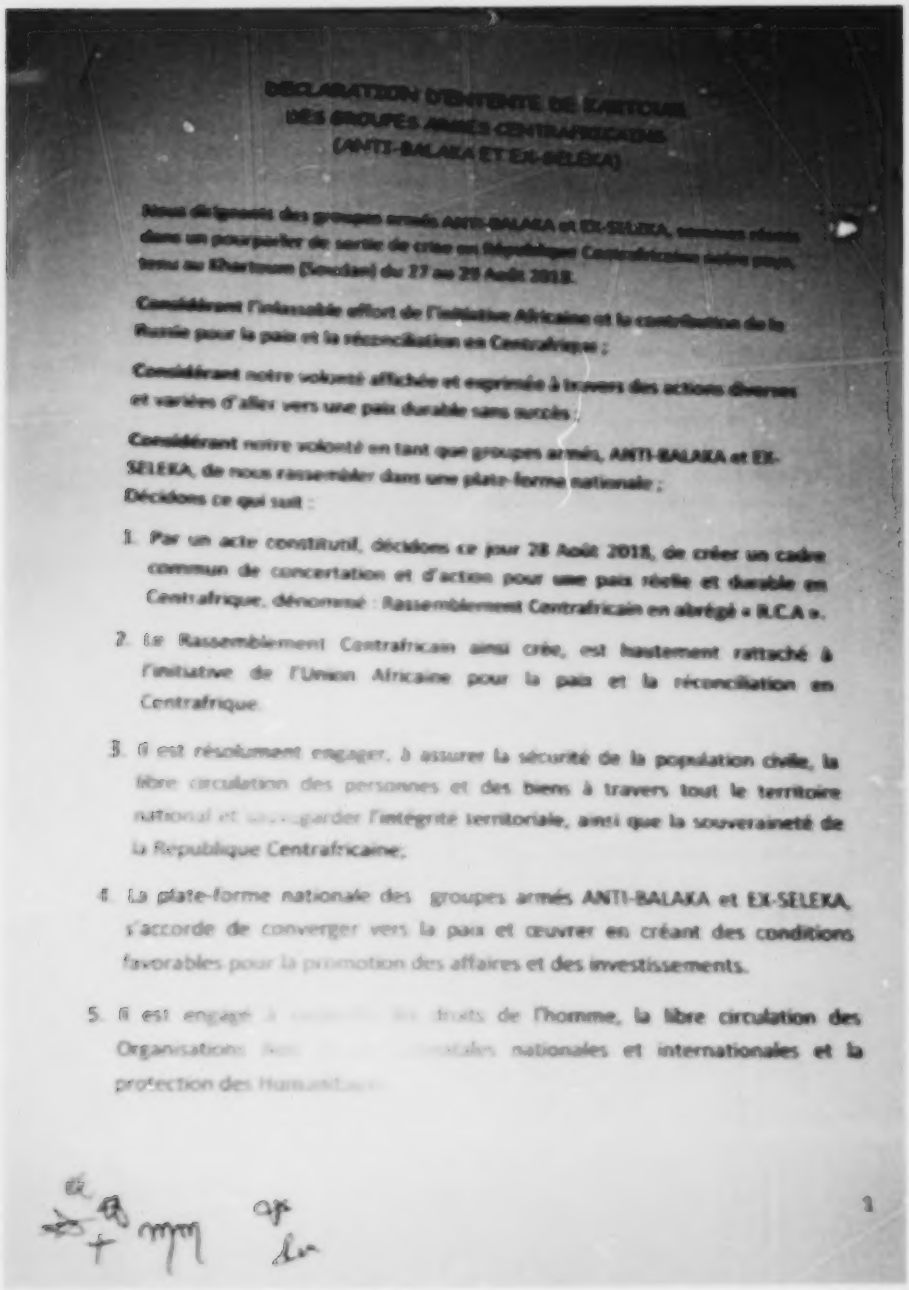
Politique

1. Loi d'amnistie générale ;
2. Dialogue/Négociations sans un pays neutre ;
3. "Consultation" des Groupes Armés pour le choix d'un Premier Ministre
4. Autonomisation des Régions
5. Révision constitutionnelle

3R BAÏDOU Aliyan VICE Président
FPRC ABOUBAKAR-Siddick Ali Porte parole
RJ/B DJIM-WEEI BEBITI Laurent Président
UFR-F GBEYA-Bienvenu Christian SG
SELEKA-RENOVGE NOJERAYOM-FERDINAND-S.G-
UPC Soulemane DAOUDA Porte parole - Conseiller politique
M.L.C ABDEL RAZICK DEYA PORTE-PAROLE
A-TB/NG MOUMINE Directeur Coordonnateur Général adjoint
RPRC ABAKAR Moustapha Coordonnateur National

Annex 2.2: Memorandum of Understanding called "Declaration d'entente de Khartoum des groupes armés centrafricains (anti-balaka et ex-Séléka)" dated 28 August 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a participant in the Khartoum meeting on 2 September 2018.



DECLARATION D'ENTENTE DE KARTOUM
DES GROUPES ARMES CENTRAFRICAINS
(ANTI-BALAKA ET EX-SELEKA)

Nous dirigeants des groupes armés ANTI-BALAKA et EX-SELEKA, sommes réunis dans un pourparler de sortie de crise en République Centrafricaine notre pays, tenu au Khartoum (Soudan) du 27 au 28 Août 2018.

Considérant l'inlassable effort de l'Initiative Africaine et la contribution de la Russie pour la paix et la réconciliation en Centrafrique ;

Considérant notre volonté affichée et exprimée à travers des actions diverses et variées d'aller vers une paix durable sans succès ;

Considérant notre volonté en tant que groupes armés, ANTI-BALAKA et EX-SELEKA, de nous rassembler dans une plate-forme nationale ;
Décidons ce qui suit :

1. Par un acte constitutif, décidons ce jour 28 Août 2018, de créer un cadre commun de concertation et d'action pour une paix réelle et durable en Centrafrique, dénommé : Rassemblement Centrafricain en abrégé « R.C.A ».

2. Le Rassemblement Centrafricain ainsi crée, est hautement rattaché à l'initiative de l'Union Africaine pour la paix et la réconciliation en Centrafrique.

3. Il est résolument engagé, à assurer la sécurité de la population civile, la libre circulation des personnes et des biens à travers tout le territoire national et sauvegarder l'intégrité territoriale, ainsi que la souveraineté de la République Centrafricaine;

4. La plate-forme nationale des groupes armés ANTI-BALAKA et EX-SELEKA, s'accorde de converger vers la paix et œuvrer en créant des conditions favorables pour la promotion des affaires et des investissements.

5. Il est engagé à [illegible] les droits de l'homme, la libre circulation des Organisations [illegible] nationales et internationales et la protection des Humanitaires

1

6. A cet effet, Nous, Rassemb'rment Centrafricain, invitons les autorités de la République Centrafricaine et le Gouvernement, l'Union africaine, la CEEAC, la CEMAC, l'Union Européenne, la France, la République de la Russie, toute la communauté internationale, partenaire de la République Centrafricaine à œuvrer ensemble pour la tenue dans un délai raisonnable, des assises de l'initiative africaine pour la paix et la réconciliation en Centrafrique.

7. La plate-forme nationale des groupes armés ANTI-BALAKA et EX-SELEKA, entend transmettre au panel de l'initiative africaine avec ampliations aux partenaires de la République Centrafricaine, un manifeste de revendications conjointes.

8. Demandons aux autorités de la République Centrafricaine et le son Gouvernement et ce, dans un souci de paix effective et durable, ainsi que dans un esprit de diversification de partenariats et de diplomatie économique intelligente pour le bien-être et le bonheur du peuple Centrafricain ; d'intégrer dans le processus de paix conduit sous les hospices de l'Union Africaine, la participation et l'implication active des Etats :

- De la Russie, pays ami ;
- SOUDAN ;
- TCHAD ;
- CONGO BRAZAVILLE ;
- CAMEROUN;
- CONGO DEMOCRATIQUE;

Pays frères avec lesquels notre pays, la République Centrafricaine partage des frontières.

Tenons à exprimer nos sincères remerciements à la République du soudan et au peuple soudanais ainsi qu'à Son Excellence, Monsieur Oumar El BECHIR, Président de la République, Chef de l'Etat pour l'accueil fraternel et chaleureux. Nous ne pouvons oublier l'Etat de la Russie et les Représentants de la coopération Russie-RCA pour la bonne réussite de cette rencontre.

Fait à KHARTOUM, le 28 Août 2018

2

Ont convenu et signé

Les dirigeants des groupes armés ci-après:

N°	NOMS ET PRENOMS	SIGNATURE
01	Gl. NOURADINE ADAM, FPRC	
02	Gl. MAXIME MOKOM, ANTI-BALAKA	
03	Gl. ABDOULAYE ISSENE, FPRC-CNDS	
04	Gl. MAHAMAT AL-KATIM, MPC	
05	Gl. Ali DARASS, UPC	

OBSERVATEURS AU POURPARLER DE KHARTOUM :

- Représentant de la République du SOUDAN

- Représentant de la République de la RUSSIE

Annex 2.3: Communiqué of the Government of the Central African Republic dated 29 August 2018 on the Khartoum Meeting.

Document obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 30 August 2018.

MINISTERE DE LA COMMUNICATION ET DES MEDIA

BUREAU DU PORTE-PAROLE DU GOUVERNEMENT

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
UNITE – DIGNITE – TRAVAIL

BANGUI, LE 29 AOUT 2018

COMMUNIQUÉ GOUVERNEMENTAL

Préoccupés par la situation d'insécurité prevalant en Republique Centrafricaine, la Fédération de Russie, Membre Permanent du Conseil de Sécurité des Nations-Unies, et la République du Soudan ont pris l'initiative d'une rencontre à Khartoum au Soudan, avec les responsables des groupes armés, le 28 Août 2018.

A l'issue de cette rencontre, ces groupes armés ont fait une déclaration dite « **déclaration d'entente Khartoum des groupes armés centrafricains (anti-balaka et ex-séléka)** » selon laquelle ils s'engagent à agir pour converger vers la restauration effective de la paix et la création des conditions favorables à la libre circulation des personnes et des biens. Par ailleurs, ils invitent les parties prenantes y compris la Russie et le Gouvernement centrafricain à œuvrer ensemble pour la tenue des assises de l'Union Africaine.

Le Gouvernement Centrafricain prend acte de cette déclaration, dont les signataires disent vouloir agir pour la sécurité des populations et rappelle qu'il ne ménage aucun effort ni engagement necessaires à l'atteinte de ses objectifs principaux que sont la paix, la sécurité et la restauration de l'autorité de l'Etat;

A cet effet, il s'est inscrit et soutient la demarche de l'Union Africaine pour la paix et la réconciliation, cadre dans lequel devront être versées toutes les initiatives pour leur finalisation en accord définitif de sortie de crise.

Le Ministre de la Communication et des Media,
Porte-parole du Gouvernement,

Ange Maxime KAZAGUI

Annex 2.4: Letter of thanks from the President of the Central African Republic to the President of the Russian Federation dated 29 August 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 2 September 2018.

Présidence de la République

République Centrafricaine
Unité - Dignité - Travail

Objet Lettre de remerciement

Monsieur le Président et cher ami,

A l'initiative de la Fédération de Russie et la République du Soudan s'est tenue une réunion de sortie de crise en République Centrafricaine du 27 au 29 Août 2018 à Khartoum au Soudan, regroupant les groupes armés : ANTI-BALAKA et EX-SELEKA.

Au terme de cette réunion, une déclaration d'entente a été signée par les groupes armés ANTI-BALAKA et EX SELEKA par laquelle ces derniers s'engagent résolument sur la voie de la paix et la réconciliation nationale soutenue par l'initiative de l'Union Africaine pour la paix et la réconciliation en Centrafrique.

Par la présente, je tiens à vous exprimer personnellement et à travers vous la Fédération de Russie notre reconnaissance et gratitude pour le rôle central que vous avez joué et qui a permis la signature de cette déclaration qui créé les conditions favorables pour une négociation de paix entre le gouvernement et les groupes armés dans le cadre de l'initiative de l'Union Africaine.

Mon pays est rassuré de votre présence à ses côtés dans la poursuite des actions devant conduire à un accord de paix définitif et global.

Je vous prie de croire, Monsieur le Président et cher ami à l'assurance de ma haute considération.

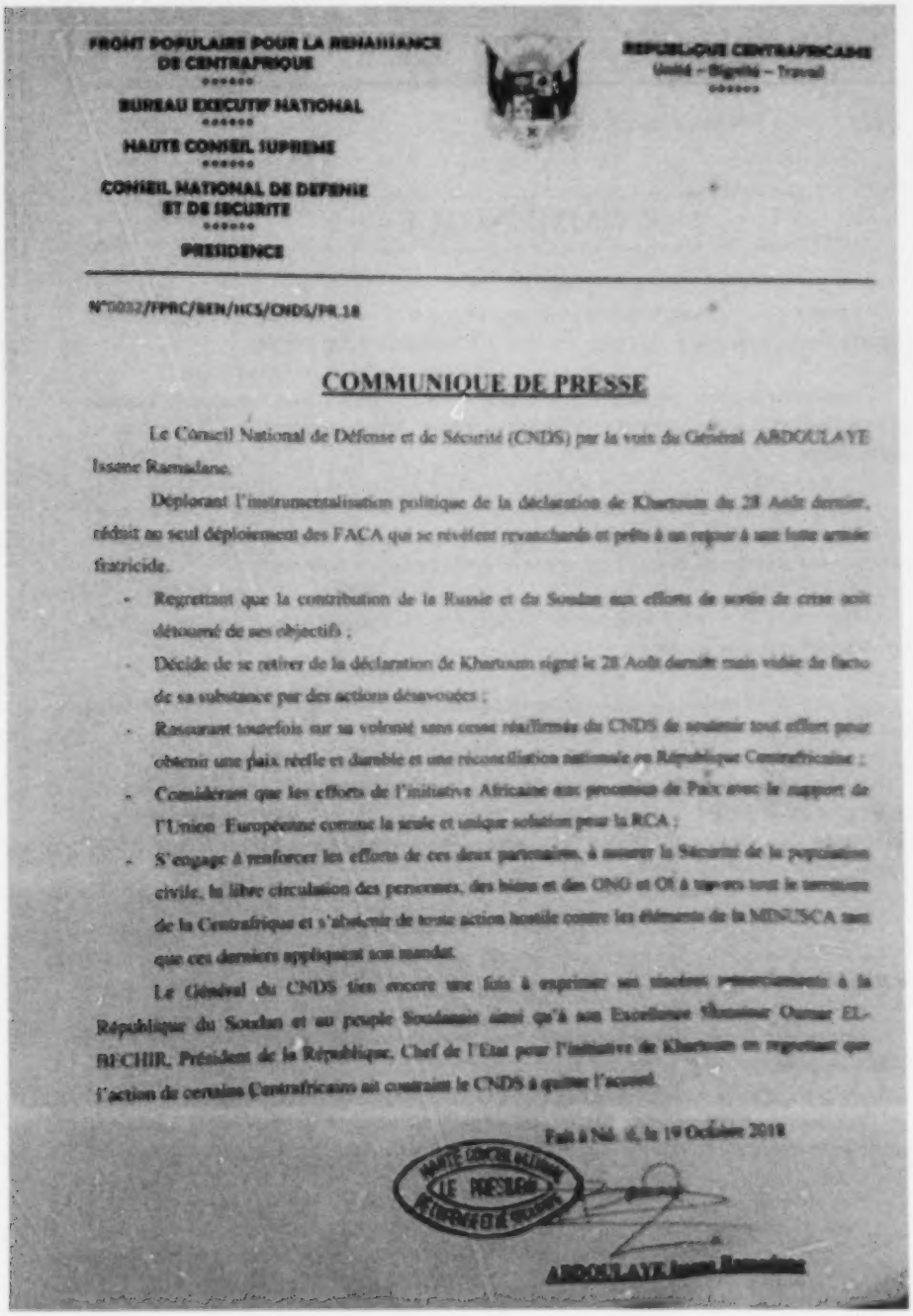
Pr. Faustin Archange TOUADERA

Son Excellence Vladimir POUTINE
Président de la Fédération de Russie

Annex 2.5: Three communiqués regarding the withdrawal of ex-Séléka factions from the Khartoum Declaration.

1. Communiqué dated 19 0ctober 2018 announcing FPRC's disengagement from the Khartoum Declaration.

Document obtained by the Panel from a FPRC representative on 20 0ctober 2018.



FRONT POPULAIRE POUR LA RENAISSANCE DE CENTRAFRIQUE

BUREAU EXECUTIF NATIONAL

HAUTE CONSEIL SUPREME

CONSEIL NATIONAL DE DEFENSE ET DE SECURITE

PRESIDENCE

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
Unité – Dignité – Travail

N°0032/FPRC/BEN/HCS/CNDS/PR.18

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Le Conseil National de Défense et de Sécurité (CNDS) par la voix du Général ABDOULAYE Issene Ramadane.

Déplorant l'instrumentalisation politique de la déclaration de Khartoum du 28 Août dernier, réduit au seul déploiement des FACA qui se révèlent revanchards et prêts à un relancer à une lutte armée fratricide.

- Regrettant que la contribution de la Russie et du Soudan aux efforts de sortie de crise soit détourné de ses objectifs ;
- Décide de se retirer de la déclaration de Khartoum signé le 28 Août dernier mais vidée de facto de sa substance par des actions désavouées ;
- Rassurant toutefois sur sa volonté sans cesse réaffirmée du CNDS de soutenir tout effort pour obtenir une paix réelle et durable et une réconciliation nationale en République Centrafricaine ;
- Considérant que les efforts de l'initiative Africaine aux processus de Paix avec le support de l'Union Européenne comme la seule et unique solution pour la RCA ;
- S'engage à renforcer les efforts de ces deux partenaires, à assurer la Sécurité de la population civile, la libre circulation des personnes, des biens et des ONG et OI à travers tout le territoire de la Centrafrique et s'abstenir de toute action hostile contre les éléments de la MINUSCA tant que ces derniers appliquent son mandat.

Le Général du CNDS tien encore une fois à exprimer ses sincères remerciements à la République du Soudan et au peuple Soudanais ainsi qu'à son Excellence Monsieur Omar EL-BECHIR, Président de la République, Chef de l'Etat pour l'initiative de Khartoum en regrettant que l'action de certains Centrafricains ait contraint le CNDS à quitter l'accord.

Fait à Ndj. le, le 19 Octobre 2018

LE PRESIDENT

ABDOULAYE Issene Ramadane

2. Communiqué dated 19 October announcing UPC's disengagement from the Khartoum Declaration.

Document obtained by the Panel from a UPC representative on 20 October 2018.

MOUVEMENT DE L'UNITE POUR LA PAIX EN CENTRAFRIQUE
COORDINATION MILITAIRE
SECRETARIAT GENERAL

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
Unité – Dignité Travail

N°0114 / UPC / DIR MIL/SG-2018

COMMUNIQUE

L'Unité pour la Paix en Centrafrique (UPC), à travers la voix de son Coordinateur Militaire, Chef d'Etat major de l'UPC, le Général d'Armées Ali DARRASSA,

Déplorant la vision partiale d'un exécutif qui a figé depuis huit mois toute avancée du plan national du DDRR et n'a produit aucun effort probant en faveur de la Réconciliation;

Déplorant l'instrumentalisation de basse politique de la Déclaration de l'Entente de Khartoum du 28 Août dernier détournée au seul profit du déploiement des FACA qui se révèlent revanchardes et prêtes à un retour à une lutte armée fratricide;

Regrettant que la contribution de la Russie et du Soudan aux efforts de sortie de crise soit piétinée sans vergogne;

Décide de se retirer de ladite Entente signée le 28 Août dernier car vidée de facto de sa substance par l'action de certains;

Le coordinateur militaire, chef d'Etat major de l'UPC, le Général d'Armées Ali Darrassa, s'interrogeant sur la position d'acteurs qui d'une part promeuvent des investissements dans les zones qui jusque-là ont été délaissées par les régimes qui se sont succédés, et d'autre part insufflent une culture agressive de reconquête partisane;

Rassurant toutefois sur la volonté sans cesse réaffirmée de l'UPC de soutenir tout effort pour obtenir une paix réelle et durable ainsi qu'une réconciliation nationale en République Centrafricaine,

Considérant les efforts de l'Initiative Africaine et le support au processus de Paix de l'Union Européenne

S'engage à renforcer son soutien aux actions de ces deux partenaires, à assurer la sécurité de la population civile; la libre circulation des personnes, des biens, des ONG et OI

Tel : 75 67 70 46 / 72 48 25 12
Le format de cette lettre est un document officiel et authentique de l'UPC. Tout autre modèle est un faux

à travers tout le territoire de la Centrafrique, et à s'abstenir de toute action hostile contre les éléments de la MINUSCA tant que ces derniers appliquent le mandat pour lequel ils ont été déployés.

Le Coordinateur Militaire, Chef d'Etat major de l'UPC, le Général d'Armées Ali Darrassa tient encore une fois à exprimer ses sincères remerciements à la République du Soudan, au peuple Soudanais ainsi qu'à son Excellence Monsieur Oumar EL-BECHIR, Président de la République, Chef d'Etat pour l'initiative de Khartoum et regrette que l'action de certains Centrafricains ait contraint l'UPC à revoir sa position.

Attentif à toute inflexion significative en vue d'une sortie réelle de la crise au profit de tous les Centrafricains, le coordinateur militaire, chef d'Etat major de l'UPC, le Général d'Armées Ali Darrassa rappelle que l'UPC n'a pour objectif que la Paix et la Concorde en Centrafrique.

Vive la Paix, vive la Centrafrique apaisée.

Fait à Ngakobo, 19 Octobre 2018

Le Coordinateur Militaire, chef d'état-major de l'UPC

Général du Corps d'armée ALI DARRASSA

Tel : 75 67 70 46 – 72 48 25 12

Le format de cette lettre est le document officiel et authentique de l'UPC. Tout autre modèle est un faux.

3. Communiqué dated 22 October announcing MPC's disengagement from the Khartoum Declaration.

Documents obtained by the Panel from a MPC representative on 22 October 2018.

MOUVEMENT PATRIOTIQUE POUR LA CENTRAFRIQUE

MPC

PAIX UNITE LIBERTE

Communiqué de presse N°015/2018 relatif à la déclaration de Khartoum du 28 Août 2018

En effet, le Mouvement Patriotique pour la Centrafrique (**MPC**) regrette que la contribution de la Russie et du Soudan aux efforts de sortie de crise en Centrafrique soit vaine et déplore l'instrumentalisation politique de la déclaration de Khartoum du 28 Août dernier, qui se remise au seul déploiement des FACA, revanchardes et prêtes à un retour de la lutte armée.

Pour cela, le **MPC** décide de se retirer de la déclaration de Khartoum signée le 28 Août 2018, déclaration qu'il considère vidée, de facto, de toute sa quintessence, par des actions malsaines et désavouées.

Par ailleurs, le **MPC** considère que l'initiative africaine au processus de paix soutenue par l'Union Européenne, est la seul et unique voie de sortie de crise, et rassure sur sa volonté de sortir tout effort de retour à une paix réelle et durable, ainsi qu'une réconciliation nationale en Republique Centrafricaine.

En outre, **le MPC** s'engage à soutenir les efforts de ces deux partenaires que sont l'Union Africaine et l'Union Européenne, à assurer la protection des populations civiles, la libre circulation des personnes et des biens, la libre circulation des agents des ONG et des organisations internationales sur toute l'étendue du territoire national Centrafricain.

Il s'engage également à s'abstenir de toute action hostile contre les éléments de la MINUSCA, tant que ces derniers appliquent le mandant pour lequel ils sont été déployés.

22 OCT 2018

Enfin, le **MPC** tient une fois de plus, à remercier la république sœur du Soudan, le peuple Soudanaise ainsi que son Excellence le président Omar EL BECHIR pour l'initiative qu'ils ont prise, et regrette l'action malsaine de certains Centrafricains, l'ayant obligé à quitter l'accord.

Vive la paix! Vive la réconciliation nationale! Vive la Centrafrique !

Fait à Kaga Bandoro le 22/10/2018

Le Général **ALKATIM MAHAMAT**

Chef d'Etat Major du Mouvement **MPC**

22 OCT 2018

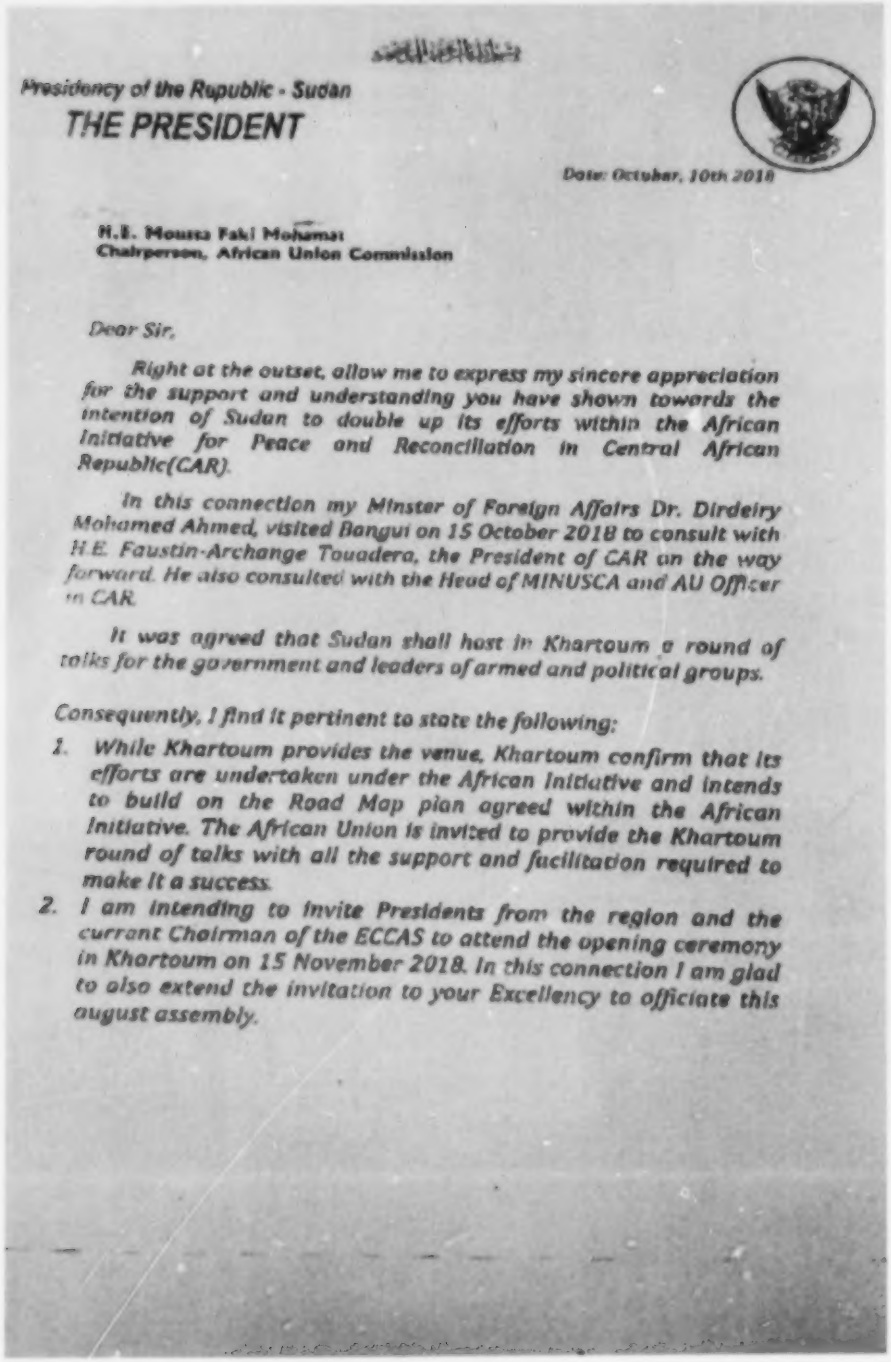
GENERAL
2E DIVISION

LE CHEF D'ETAT MAJOR DES ARMES

MPC

Annex 2.6: Letter of the Sudanese Head of State dated 10 October 2018 about the African Union Initiative and the holding of a meeting in Khartoum in November 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 2 November 2018.



Presidency of the Republic - Sudan

THE PRESIDENT

Date: October, 10th 2018

H.E. Moussa Faki Mohamat
Chairperson, African Union Commission

Dear Sir,

Right at the outset, allow me to express my sincere appreciation for the support and understanding you have shown towards the intention of Sudan to double up its efforts within the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in Central African Republic(CAR).

In this connection my Minster of Foreign Affairs Dr. Dirdeiry Mohamed Ahmed, visited Bangui on 15 October 2018 to consult with H.E. Faustin-Archange Touadera, the President of CAR on the way forward. He also consulted with the Head of MINUSCA and AU Officer in CAR.

It was agreed that Sudan shall host in Khartoum a round of talks for the government and leaders of armed and political groups.

Consequently, I find it pertinent to state the following:

1. While Khartoum provides the venue, Khartoum confirm that its efforts are undertaken under the African Initiative and intends to build on the Road Map plan agreed within the African Initiative. The African Union is invited to provide the Khartoum round of talks with all the support and facilitation required to make it a success.
2. I am intending to invite Presidents from the region and the currant Chairman of the ECCAS to attend the opening ceremony in Khartoum on 15 November 2018. In this connection I am glad to also extend the invitation to your Excellency to officiate this august assembly.

3. I excended an invitation to H.E. President Touadera to attend the opening ceremony and send his delegation for the talks. I also request him to arrange with the African Union.
4. I wholly depend on the African Union Office in Bangui and the African Initiative for approaching the armed and political groups and arrange their participation in the Khartoum round of talks.
5. It is my intention that if the parties agree on a peace deal, a committee shall be formed to follow up and support implementation.

Accept, your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Omer Hassan Ahmed Elbashir
President of the Republic of the Sudan

Annex 2.7: Update on the advisory and Monitoring Committee for National, Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Repatriation.

After an intensive year 2017 in which regular meetings were organised between armed groups and the Government to prepare the DDRR pilot project, the Panel notes that the Committee has substantially reduced the frequency of its meetings since January 2018. The DDRR pilot-project was completed in January 2018. Out of 480 combatants from 12 armed groups (FPRC and Révolution et Justice/Sayo refused to take part), 439 were disarmed and demobilised. 248 are integrated into the FACA. The others took part in various trainings with the aim of being reintegrated into civilian life.[1]

In July 2018, the Government announced that it was launching the main DDRR process by starting in the western part of the country with a selection of armed groups which expressed their readiness to participate. However, the fact that some armed groups have not endorsed this decision contributed to delay the beginning of the process initially scheduled for September 2018 (see communiqué below).[2]

The idea of starting with the West originates from the realisation that armed groups from the area have less-articulated political positions and a greater readiness for disarmament.[3]

The DDRR process is slowed down by the tense relations existing within the Committee. On 8 October 2018, armed groups' representatives published a joint communiqué asking for the Committee government representatives to resign based on accusations of fund mismanagement (see communiqué below). Since then, additional Government representatives have been appointed to support the existing team.

[1] Meeting with Colonel Selesson, DDRR advisor at the Presidency and head of the Advisory and Monitoring Committee for National DDRR, Bangui, 17 January 2018.

[2] Meeting with Suleiman Daouda, UPC and deputy chair of the Advisory and Monitoring Committee for National DDRR, Bangui, 8 August 2018.

[3] Meeting with confidential source, Bangui, 9 September 2018.

Declaration of armed group representatives in the DDRR Committee concerning the start of the DDRR process in the west of the country.

Document obtained by the Panel from an armed group representative on 3 September 2018.

Les Représentants des Groupes Politico-militaires membres du Comité Consultatif et de Suivi du DDRR (CCS/DDRR)

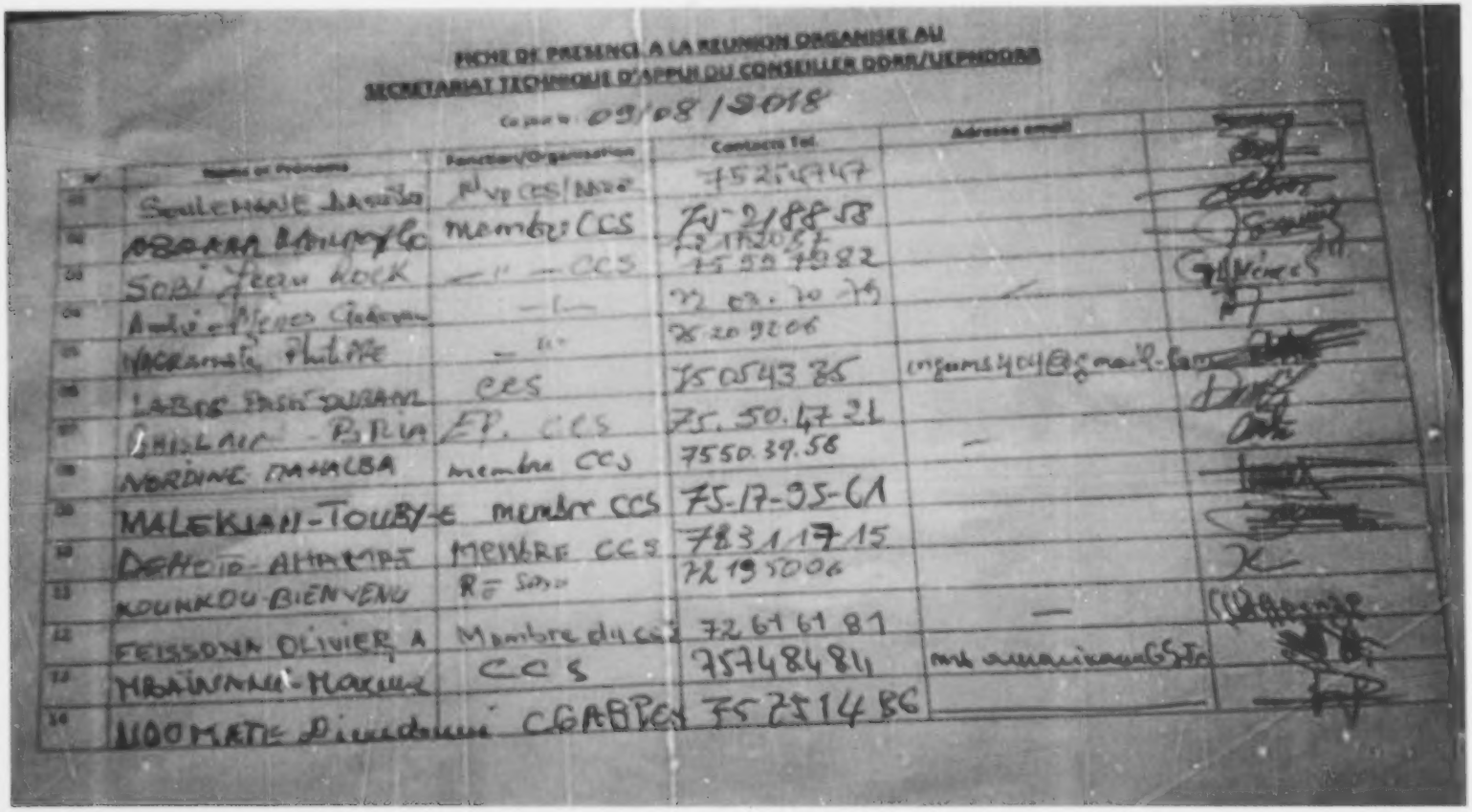
DECLARATION

Nous, représentants des groupes Politico-militaires membres du Comité Consultatif et de suivi du DDRR, à l'issue d'une réunion de circonstance tenue ce jeudi 09 Août 2018 à la Coordination de l'Unité d'Exécution du PNDDRR(UEPNDDRR) tenons à faire la déclaration suivante à l'attention de l'opinion Nationale et Internationale que nous prenons à témoins.

Surpris d'apprendre sur les ondes les déclarations du Président du CCS/DDRR, Coordonnateur de l'UEPNDDRR et aussi conseiller à la Présidence de la République en charge du DDRR, annonçant un éventuel lancement dans l'Ouest du gros Programme DDRR courant Septembre 2018 avec certains groupes soit disant favorables aux processus et que les réfracteurs seront traités comme tels.

Cette déclaration qui cache un plan ourdi vu que depuis plusieurs mois, le CCS, Cadre unique d'échange et de partage sur des recommandations relatives à la mise en œuvre du processus DDRR, le quel devrait se réunir au moins une fois par mois n'est pas convoqué depuis Février 2018 jusqu'à ce jour pour des raisons que l'on ignore. Alors que depuis la réalisation du projet pilote DDR réussi grâce à la volonté réelle des groupes Politico-militaires ou aucun bilan n'est présenté aux membres du dit Comité, des activités parallèles se tiennent en dehors de ce Cadre légal.

Mais à quel niveau cette décision du lancement du DDRR dans l'Ouest a-t-elle été prise ? Une décision aussi importante prise sans concertation a-t-elle une chance de réussir ?Veut-on programmer la mort du DDRR ?

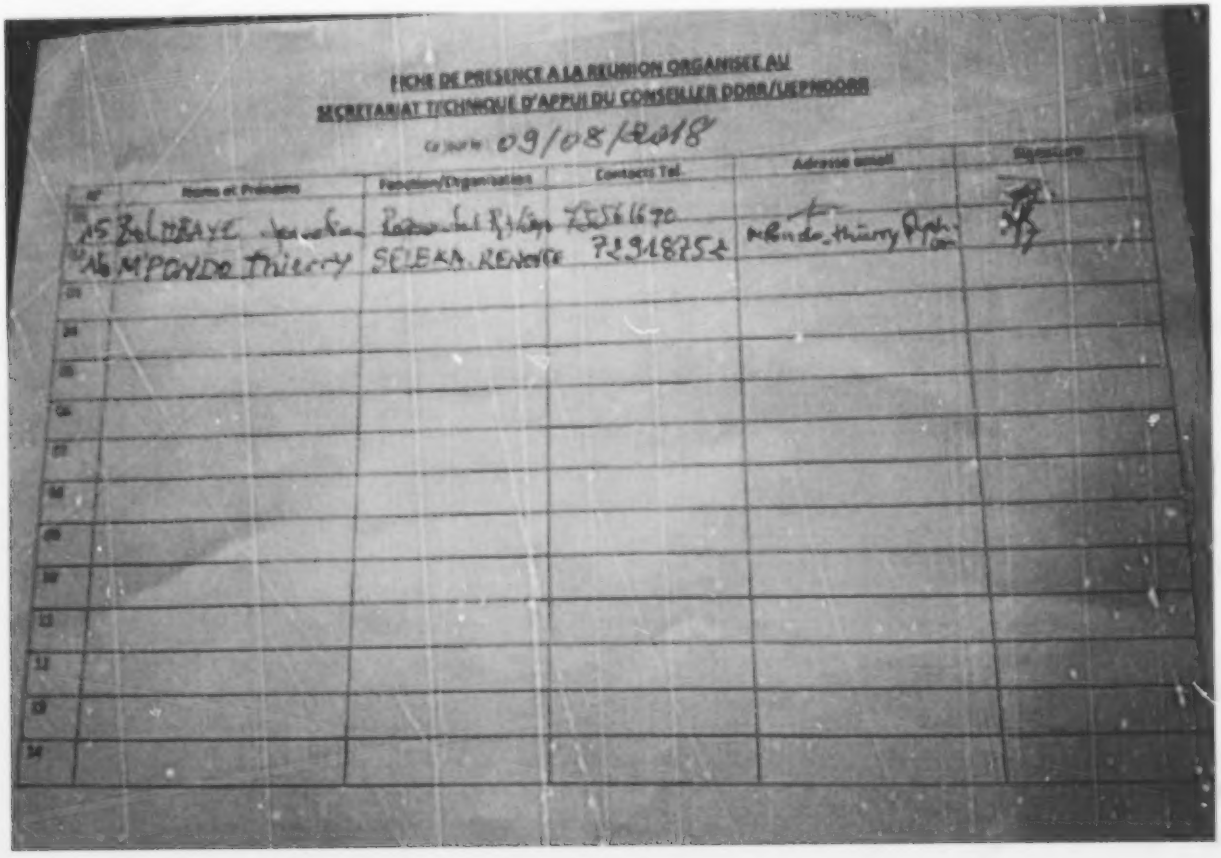


FICHE DE PRESENCE A LA REUNION ORGANISEE AU
SECRETARIAT TECHNIQUE D'APPUI DU CONSEILLER DDRR/UEPHDDRR

Le : 09/08/2018

N°	Noms et Prénoms	Fonction/Organisation	Contacts Tel	Adresse email	
01	SOULEMANE Lamine	Pt VP CES/NDO	75254747		
02	OBAMA Bamory Co	Membre CCS	76-218858		
03	SOBI Jean Kock	" CCS	75 59 75 82		
04	Audrey Pierre Clarence	"	72 03 70 79		
05	YACKAMBI Philippe	"	78 20 92 06		
06	LABBE Jean Durand	CCS	75 05 43 85		
07	EMILIAN Patrick	VP. CCS	75. 50. 47 21		
08	NORDINE MAHAMBA	membre CCS	7550.39.58		
09	MALEKIAN-TOUBY-E	MEMBRE CCS	75-17-95-61		
10	DEMBELE-AHMADOU	MEMBRE CCS	78317715		
11	KOUAKOU-BIENVENU	RE SOMA	72195006		
12	FEISSOUA OLIVIER A	Membre du CCS	72 61 61 87	—	
13	MBAINAINAI-MAXIME	CCS	75748481	mb.amaniaux@gsta	
14	NOOMATE Dieudonné	CGABBES	75 25 14 86		

S/2018/1119



FICHE DE PRESENCE A LA REUNION ORGANISEE AU
SECRETARIAT TECHNIQUE D'APPUI DU CONSEILLER DDRR/UEPNDDRR

Date: 09/08/2018

N°	Noms et Prénoms	Fonction/Organisation	Contacts Tel.	Adresse email	Signature
01	MBOLIKEAYE [illegible]	Point focal RJ/Kiga	75556170	mbondo_thierry@yahoo.com	
02	NGO M'PONDO Thierry	SECLEA RENOVE	P.2918752		
03					
04					
05					
06					
07					
08					
09					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					

Communiqué requesting the resignation of the individuals managing the DDRR Committee.

Document obtained by the Panel from an armed group representative on 10 October 2018.

LES REPRESENTANTS DES GROUPES POLITICO-MILITAIRES MEMBRES DU COMITE CONSULTATIF ET DE SUIVI DU DDRR (C.C.S/DDRR)

République Centrafricaine

Unité-Dignité-Travail

Tel : 75 50 39 58 /75 79 14 86 /75 25 47 47

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Suite à la réunion de la coordination tenue le 27 Septembre 2018, basée sur l'évaluation des activités du DDRR (fonctionnement du Comité Consultatif et de Suivi, bilan du projet Pilote, l'Unité d'Exécution du Programme National DDRR...), il est à noter qu'en dépit de quelques points forts dont la forte volonté et l'implication profonde du Président de la République, Chef de l'État, Président du Comité Stratégique DDR/RSS/RN y compris l'engagement et la détermination des Groupes Politico-militaires avec l'appui soutenu de la Communauté Internationale et des partenaires impliqués, plusieurs points de blocage et constats négatifs sont relevés notamment :

- La mauvaise lecture de la vision du Chef de l'État sur le DDRR par l'organe chargé de sa mise en œuvre.
- L'absence des comptes rendus fidèles des recommandations du CCS (cadre permanent d'échanges franches et des discussions sans tabou devenu organe facultatif dans la mise en œuvre du processus) au Comité Stratégique.
- Le non-retour des documents amendés en plénière du CCS et transmis au Comité Stratégique pour validation y compris des recommandations.
- La Gestion opaque des ressources allouée à l'UEPNDDR y compris le CCS.
- Des blocages et empêchement du dialogue franc et de certaines vérités, l'une des raisons occasionnant la non-participation des deux (2) groupes (**FPRC** et **RJ/Sayo**) au projet Pilote DDR.
- La crise de confiance ; mauvaise collaboration entre les représentants des Groupes Armés membres du Bureau et simples membres du CCS avec le Président dudit Comité refusant et évitant tout contact, prenant des décisions à un

niveau centralisé avec l'Unité d'Exécution réduis au Secrétariat Technique d'appui en dehors du CCS.

- Campagnes mensongers, d'incitation aux troubles et à la division entretenues par cette équipe centralisée en mission d'affaire à Bouar, Koui, Zoukombo concernant les indemnités accordées aux représentants des Groupes Armés membres du CCS pour la restitution, la sensibilisation, la communication etc., malgré l'engagement signé relatif à son utilisation; cause principale des cas abusifs des remplacements parfois par complicité et arrangement en violation des procédures et textes de base du Comité.
- Dépossession du CCS de son rôle de Suivi causant plusieurs défaillances et imperfections dans la mise en œuvre du projet Pilote DDR coté Réintégration Socio-Économique.
- L'inorganisation régulière des sessions chaque début des mois d'années en générale et plusieurs mois en 2018 sans raisons valables.

Fort de ce qui précède, les Groupes Armés réunis recommandent :

1. La démission du Colonel **Noel Bienvenu SELESSON** pour :
   - *Cumule de postes* (Conseiller DDR à la Présidence, Coordonnateur de l'Unité d'Exécution du PNDDRR, Président du CCS/DDRR etc.) ;
   - *Disfonctionnement et Mauvaise gestion* des ressources financières et logistiques allouées au Comité.
   -
2. La démission du Chargé de Mission aux Opérations DDR ; **M. Samuel TOUATENA** pour complicité, mauvaises gestions et coordinations des opérations DDRR.

3. Le respect de l'article **8** du Décret **n° 16.284** Portant Organisation et Fonctionnement de la Coordination nationale du DDRR/RSS/RN en ce qui concerne l'Unité d'Exécution.

Fermement engagés à poursuivre les efforts de Paix, nous réitérons notre disponibilité à contribuer de manière efficace à la réussite du programme DDRR.

Fait à Bangui, le 08 Octobre 2018.

Annex 2.8: Draft of the decree for the creation of the "Unité de Défense Temporaire" (Temporary Defense Unit) and signature page.

Documents obtained by the Panel from a participant to the Khartoum meeting on 10 September 2018.

DÉCRET
relatif aux unités d'autodéfense temporaires

BROUILLON

Les unités d'autodéfense temporaires (UAT), sont des formations militaires agissant pour assurer le maintien de l'ordre et le fonctionnement des pouvoirs publics sur les territoires où les Forces Armées de la RCA (les FACA) et la gendarmerie sont absentes. Les UAT assurent le maintien de l'ordre, la securité des citoyens et le fonctionnement régulier et ininterrompu de l'Administration locale et des représentants du pouvoir d'État sur le territoire qui leur est confié.

La réglementation juridique des activités des UAT s'exerce conformément à la Constitution de la République centrafricaine et à l'Accord sur la réconciliation, dont le présent Décret fait partie intégrante.

Les membres des UAT peuvent être des citoyens âgés de plus de 18 ans, résidant ou exerçant une activité professionnelle sur le territoire concerné, ayant volontairement exprimé leurs souhaits de participer dans les activités des UAT, capables de remplir leurs devoirs de maintien de l'ordre public en fonction de leurs qualités morales et de leur état de santé.

La procédure d'admission dans les UAT s'effectue à titre individuel sur la base d'une demande écrite. La décision d'admission est prise par le Représentant Plénipotentiaire du Président de la République centrafricaine sur le territoire concerné sur la proposition du Commandant de l'unité locale d'autodéfense. La décision est rendue sous forme d'une ordonnance. Pour chaque membre des UAT, une fiche d'inscription de l'employé des UAT est établie (Annexe N°2). Chaque personne admise reçoit un certificat d'un employé des UAT (Annexe N°3) et un jeton. Le certificat est délivré pour une durée maximale d'un an, après quoi sa durée de validité peut être prolongée pour la même période.

Les UAT sont sous l'autorité du Représentant Plénipotentiaire du Président.

Les UAT exercent ses activités jusqu'à la formation des FACA et de la gendarmerie sur le territoire, mais pas pour plus d'un an.

La liste, les frontières, les centres administratifs, les effectifs (pas plus de 500 personnes sur le territoire du district militaire) des unités d'autodéfense temporaires et de leurs emplacements sont déterminés par le Représentant plénipotentiaire du Président sur le territoire et en coordination avec les organes de réconciliation.

Afin de remplir les fonctions qui leur sont assignées, le personnel des UAT doit immédiatement et sans objection exécuter les ordres de ses commandants immédiats ;

Afin de remplir les fonctions qui leur sont assignées, les membres des UAT ont le droit de détenir des personnes soupçonnées d'avoir commis des crimes de guerre ou d'autres crimes;

La direction des UAT populaires est assurée par le commandant des UAR nommé par le Représentant Plénipotentiaire du Président sur le territoire, sur proposition de l'Administration locale.

Afin d'interagir et de coordonner les activités des UAT, le Président peut créer des organes de coordination (état-major), dont la procédure de création et d'exploitation sont déterminées par le présent Décret.

Le commandant des UAT :

- organise les activités directes des UAT, organise la sélection du personnel ;
- participe à la planification du travail des UAT, élabore un calendrier, tient à jour la feuille de pointage.
- donne des instructions au personnel des UAT, exerce un contrôle de travail pendant les services, tient registre des résultats de travail ;
- mène une action pour la coordination et le renforcement des UAT, pour l'amélioration de la discipline interne et de l'efficacité des activités ;
- organise l'enseignement de la législation en vigueur sur le maintien de l'ordre public pour le personnel, organise des cours sur la formation physique pour le personnel des UAT, organise l'apprentissage des formes et des méthodes de lutte contre les délinquants ;
- prépare pour la discussion à la réunion des membres les questions d'organisation et d'activités des UAT ;
- sollicite la récompense pour les employés les plus distingués ;
- présente le bilan d'activité trimestriel des UAT au Représentant Plénipotentiaire du Président.

Les conditions générales et les limites de l'utilisation de la force physique par le personnel des UAT.

Les employés des UAT, lors de la participation au maintien de l'ordre public, peuvent utiliser la force physique et des moyens spéciaux pour éliminer le danger qui les menace directement ou d'autres personnes, dans les limites établies par la législation de la RCA.

Avant d'utiliser la force physique, l'employé des UAT doit informer la personne à l'égard de laquelle l'utilisation de la force est destinée, qu'il est un employé des UAT, avertir de son intention et lui donner l'occasion d'arrêter les actions qui menacent la vie et la santé de l'employé des UAT ou d'autres personnes.

Un employé des UAT a le droit de ne pas avertir de son intention de recourir à la force physique si un retard dans son application crée une menace immédiate pour la vie et la santé des citoyens ou peut entraîner d'autres conséquences graves.

L'employé des UAT pendant l'application de la force physique tient compte de la situation créée, de la nature et du degré de danger des actions des personnes contre lesquelles la force physique est appliquée, de la nature et de la force de la résistance qu'elles opposent.

L'employé des UAT est tenu de fournir des premiers soins à un citoyen ayant subi des lésions corporelles à la suite de l'utilisation de la force physique et, le cas échéant, de prendre des mesures pour lui fournir des soins médicaux dans les plus brefs délais.

Sur l'utilisation de la force physique, qui a causé des dommages à la santé d'un citoyen, l'employé des UAT est tenu d'aviser immédiatement le commandant des UAT qui au plus tard six heures de son application informent le département territorial de la gendarmerie.

Le soutien logistique des activités des UAT est assuré conjointement par l'Administration locale et par d'autres moyens non interdits par la loi.

La responsabilité des employés des UAT

Les employés de UAT sont responsables pour les actes illicites conformément à la législation de la RCA.

Dispositions finales

Le décret entre en vigueur à la date de sa signature par le Représentant Plénipotentiaire du Président et la résolution positive du Comité pour la réconciliation.

Les modifications et ajouts au présent décret doivent être apportés de la même manière que le présent décret.

UNE PROMESSE SOLENNELLE D'UN MEMBRE DE L'UNITÉ D'AUTODÉFENSE TEMPORAIRE

Moi, _____

citoyen de la République Centrafricaine, en rejoignant l'Unité d'autodéfense temporaire, je donne une promesse solennelle d'être un homme courageux, vigilant et discipliné, de mener une lutte inexpiable contre les atteintes à l'ordre public et des infractions, respecter strictement la législation de la RCA.

Je m'engage à m'acquitter honnêtement et de bonne foi de toutes les responsabilités qui m'ont été confiées, à défendre avec dévouement les droits et les intérêts des citoyens et de la société.

_____ (signature)

_____ (prénoms, nom)

Date le _____ 20___

Annex 2.9: FPRC contradictory communiqués following the vote of dismissal of Karim Meckassoua as Speaker of the National assembly (27-29 October 2018).

1. Communiqué signed by Abdoulaye Hissene and containing threats against States representatives (dated 27 October 2018).

Document obtained by the Panel from a FPRC representative on 27 October 2018.

FRONT POPULAIRE POUR LA RENAISSANCE DE CENTRAFRIQUE
******
BUREAU EXECUTIF NATIONAL
******
HAUTE CONSEIL SUPREME
******
CONSEIL NATIONAL DE DEFENSE ET DE SECURITE
******
PRESIDENCE

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE
Unité – Dignité – Travail
******

N° 0111/FPRC/BEN/HCS/CNDS/PR.18

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Suite à la destitution honteuse du Président de l'Assemblée Nationale Karim MECKASSOUA qui est sans doute un coup d'Etat parlementaire alors que nous sommes à la recherche de la paix à travers l'initiative de l'Union Africaine.

Le Conseil National de Défense et Sécurité (CNDS) dirigé par le Général ARDOU LAYE Issene Ramadane en concertation avec le MPC du Général ALKATIM et l'UPC du Général ALI Darassa.

Après constater avec amertume de cet acte qui entrete définitivement l'embryon de la démocratie centrafricaine orchestré par Monsieur TOUADERA et ses mécenaires Russes à leur tête Valeri ZAKAROV, avons décidé de rompre définitivement tout lien avec ce régime non seulement de reposome depuis le début mais des ens dictatorial.

Nous ne nous pouvons plus reconnaître la légitimité de TOUADERA en tant que Chef de l'Etat et Président de la République Centrafricaine et cela est sans appel.

Pour ce cela :

- Nous demandons purement et simplement le retrait de tous les agents de l'Etat envoyés dans nos zones respectives à savoir les zones sous contrôle du CNDS à savoir le FPRC, MPC et l'UPC dans un délai de 48h.
- Par la même occasion nous interdisons désormais et formellement à Valeri ZAKAROV et ses mercenaires de ne plus mettre pied dans nos zones.
- A la République de la Russie de nous expliquer précisément le rôle de la présence de ces mercenaires Russes proche du Kremlin dans ce pays car leurs agissements deviennent de plus en plus dangereuses pour la démocratie dans ce pays à tel enseigne que leur implication directe dans ce coup d'état parlementaire et l'assassinat hier de cette icone démocratie dans ce pays.
- A l'honorable GON BABA Lazare d'arrêter de passer des coups de fils aux certains chefs des groupes armés pour tenter cette carte honteuse et hypocrites de la manipulation car tel est le cas de votre appel au Général ALI Darassa le lundi 22 Octobre à 11h très précisément dont vous avez associé le Conseiller Economique et Sociale et ancien commandant de la Séléka OUSMAN ABAKAR.

- A la Communauté Internationale et le GIC notamment à la représentation de l'Union Européenne, à l'Ambassade des Etat Unis et à l'Ambassade de France qui ont toujours demandé l'apaisement et la main tendue à ce régime que ceci n'est plus possible car notre main tendue a toujours été démocratique et ne peut que être tendue aux respecteurs de la démocratie et la constitution ;
- Aux humanitaires que nous vous assurons la liberté de circulation et la protection ;
- Aux éléments encore conscients au sein de l'armée centrafricaine (FACA) que la responsabilité vous appelle car notre démocratie est mort sous ce régime et il est nécessaire de s'en charger de sa restauration ;
- Au panel de l'Union Africaine notre attachement vos efforts qui est jusque-là le seul espoir de cette nation ;
- Aux chefs d'Etat de la sous-région de prendre acte de décrapage impardonnable

Pour les Mouvements du FPRC, MPC et UPC

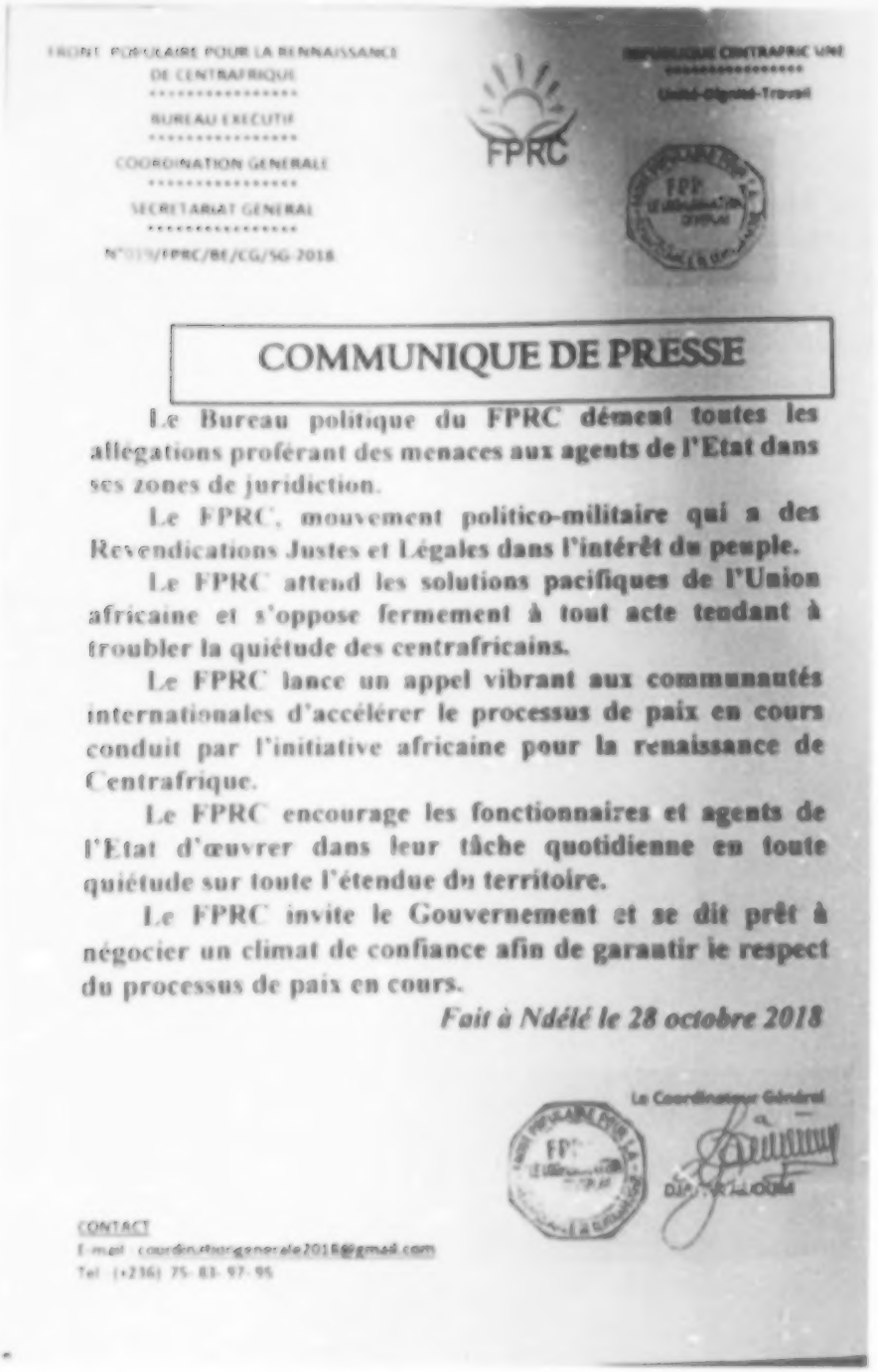
Le Président du CNDS General Abdoulaye Issene Ramadane

Fait à Ndele, le 27 Octobre 2018

ABDOULAYE Issene Ramadane

2. Communiqué signed by Djaffar Adoum, FPRC political coordinator under Nourredine Adam instruction dated 28 October 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a FPRC representative on 28 October 2018.



FRONT POPULAIRE POUR LA RENAISSANCE DE CENTRAFRIQUE

BUREAU EXECUTIF

COORDINATION GENERALE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

N°019/FPRC/BE/CG/SG-2018

FPRC

RÉPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE

Unité-Dignité-Travail

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Le Bureau politique du FPRC dément toutes les allégations proférant des menaces aux agents de l'Etat dans ses zones de juridiction.

Le FPRC, mouvement politico-militaire qui a des Revendications Justes et Légales dans l'intérêt du peuple.

Le FPRC attend les solutions pacifiques de l'Union africaine et s'oppose fermement à tout acte tendant à troubler la quiétude des centrafricains.

Le FPRC lance un appel vibrant aux communautés internationales d'accélérer le processus de paix en cours conduit par l'initiative africaine pour la renaissance de Centrafrique.

Le FPRC encourage les fonctionnaires et agents de l'Etat d'œuvrer dans leur tâche quotidienne en toute quiétude sur toute l'étendue du territoire.

Le FPRC invite le Gouvernement et se dit prêt à négocier un climat de confiance afin de garantir le respect du processus de paix en cours.

Fait à Ndélé le 28 octobre 2018

Le Coordinateur Général

CONTACT

E-mail : coordinateurgenerale2018@gmail.com

Tel : (+236) 75- 83- 97- 95

3. Communiqué signed by Nourredine Adam dated 29 October 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a FPRC representative on 29 October 2018.

FRONT POPULAIRE POUR LA
RENAISSANCE DE CENTRAFRIQUE

BUREAU EXECUTIF NATIONAL

VICE PRESIDENCE

N° 0054/FPRC/BENGUE

FPRC

République Centrafricaine

Unité - Dignité - Travail

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Vendredi 26 octobre 2018 à 19h15 l'Assemblée Nationale de la République Centrafricaine a voté par 89 voix pour 41 voix contre et 1 bulletin nul pour la destitution du Président de cette institution.

Cette destitution a été diversement et diversement appréciée par l'opinion publique et privée aussi bien nationale qu'internationale. Pour le Bureau Politique du Front pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), la destitution de Monsieur n'est autre que le résultat d'un conflit d'intérêts personnels au plus haut sommet de l'Etat. C'est la preuve que la RCA se meurt dans le monopole, la toute-puissance et la corruption. Que vaut la « parlementarisme » et la démocratie à ces niveaux-là. C'est aussi la preuve que les maux qui ont conduit à la perte et au déchirement du tissu social sont encore présents, entretenus par le régime. Au travers la récente censure du 26 octobre 2018, les parlementaires centrafricains viennent d'affirmer que « le pays va mal » que la notion d'éthique et de morale en politique n'existe plus dans le pays de Barthélemy BOGANDA, à savoir de ce que Jean-François Bayart (1981) appelle « Politique du ventre ». En RCA l'intégrité morale a pris congé la plus authentique particulièrement chez les femmes et hommes politiques.

Face au drame du tragique pour le Bureau Politique du Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC) appelle le Président Touadéra et son gouvernement à se ressaisir car le temps est compté et ne cesse d'égrener ses dernières et secondes.

Le Bureau Politique du Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC) tient ainsi à rappeler solennellement au calme et à la sérénité car personne n'est manipulable dans une République.

Le FPRC appelle les centrafricains et les centrafricaines de rester vigilant contre les manipulations, les machinations et l'instrumentalisation de « l'Affaire Maxassoua ». Dans une situation d'absence d'éthique politique, la peur est utilisée en relation avec l'instrumentalisation du confessionnel en tant que stratégie de mobilisation politique pour susciter la suspicion et la frustration. Cette manipulation ne vise qu'à inciter à des comportements belliqueux, à entretenir le climat de méfiance et de suspicion, à instaurer le climat de peur, de crainte et d'anxiété « la peur hobbesienne » Herbert Butterfield 1951) » à exacerber la haine sociale et à briser les fondements entre les communautés. Les membres de chaque communauté étant incapables d'interagir avec confiance les uns avec les autres au sujet du contexte actuel parce que comme l'avait Herbert Butterfield « Dans la situation que j'appelle 'la peur hobbesienne' [...] vous pouvez vous-même ressentir vraiment la peur terrible que vous avez à l'encontre de l'autre parti, mais vous ne pouvez pas vous faire une idée de la crainte pour la vie même comparable pour que l'autre parti puisse ressentir. Parce que vous savez que vous ne voulez aucun mal à personne, vous ne voulez rien d'autre de la vie que des garanties pour votre propre sécurité, et il est alors possible de se mettre complètement à la place de l'autre, dans la mesure

ou lui-même ne peut pas pénétrer vos pensées. *Il ne peut jamais avoir la certitude que vous avez vous-même de vos propres intentions.* »

Le FPRC rappelle également que son combat est avant tout politique. L'unité et de l'égalité des centrafricains et pose la question du matériau sur lequel s'exerce le pouvoir. L'appareil d'Etat ou l'organisation de la composition territoriale. Il est donc prépondérant de souligner l'importance de la gouvernance politique nationale et locale, de la réforme politique et administrative, dans la restauration et le développement des fonctions élémentaires de la vie sociale, de celle des populations affectées par la guerre. Nous appelons ainsi le Président Touadéra de sortir de la surdité et cécité qui le caractérisent. Nous lui rappelons que sa mission première ne consiste pas à créer les conditions qui ont conduit à la crise actuelle, mais à œuvrer pour la paix, réconciliation nationale et la cohabitation pacifique entre les centrafricaines qui, en réalité, ne peuvent pas se séparer, parce qu'elles n'y arriveront pas, mais qui se heurtent à des obstacles et pièges symboliques que des politiques dressent et exploitent de manière systématique à des fins politiciennes pour bénéficier les mannes du pouvoir.

Nous rappelons également le Président Touadéra que, comme l'écrit Frédéric Gros (2006, p. 147), « *L'injustice est toujours mal supportée que la violence. L'injustice suscite des protestations, car faisant sentir l'inégalité, elle provoque le sept d'être inférieur. Sur fond de revendication, elle préserve l'égalité comme un rêve lointain.* »
C'est pour cette raison que le FPRC lutte contre les discriminations dont sont victimes des centrafricains à cause de leur croyance religieuse, leur appartenance ethno-identitaire et leur origine régionale. Pour le FPRC, la République Centrafricaine appartient à tous les centrafricains, sans aucune distinction. De ce fait, la construction de la vie sociale fondée sur la paix, la justice et la solidarité de tous les peuples n'atteindra son but que lorsque la culture de respect mutuel imprégnera la sagesse de tous et que des actions politiques sont menées pour préparer un avenir meilleur, lesquelles actions doivent résulter d'un esprit tiré d'une grande campagne de mobilisation tournant les Centrafricaines et les Centrafricains chacun vers l'autre – non pas comme des ennemis – mais comme des humains, des concitoyens avec qui, solidairement, on doit bâtir ensemble le pays et affronter le futur ; car rien de réellement humain ne pourra se construire si certaines populations ne sont pas considérées pleinement comme citoyens. C'est pour cette raison que le FPRC/CNDS adhère sans aucune réserve à l'initiative de paix, telle que conduite par le panel des médiateurs de l'Union Africaine. Nous affirmons ainsi notre volonté de participer aux négociations qui auront lieu prochainement dans un pays neutre, sous l'égide des pays amis et partenaires de la République Centrafricaine. Le but étant de créer les conditions pour que notre cher pays, la RCA, en tant que Nation, demeure une et indivisible dans sa pluralité, c'est-à-dire, un pays où tous ses enfants, dans leurs diversités et différences culturelles et cultuelles, vivent ensemble et en harmonie.

Fait à Birao, le 29 octobre 2018

Vice-Président du FPRC

Général Noureddine ADAM

Annex 2.10: Pictures of Moyenne-Sido meeting of 5 August 2018.

Pictures obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 10 August 2018.

From left to right:
Mahamat Al-Khatim (MPC), Ali Darassa (UPC) and Abdoulaye Hissène (FPRC)

Annex 2.11: Communiqué signed by Matar Nimeiry, alias « Force », dated 15 July 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from « Force » on 9 September 2018.

Plate Forme de la Coordination Des Auto-défense de la
Etat Major de l'auto défense
Secrétariat Général
N° [illegible]/CADK/18
Tél : (+236) 72 04 29 90 / 77 80 57 07

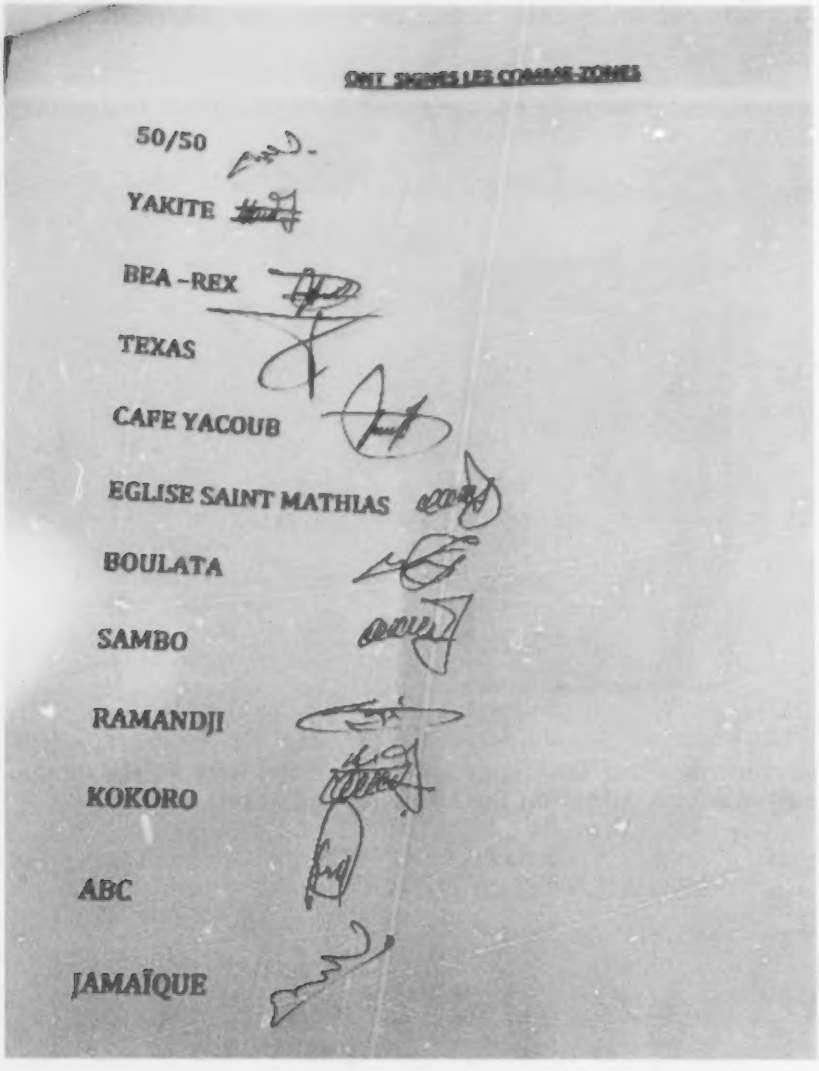
République Centrafricaine
Unité-Dignité-Travail

Sous la très Haute l'Attention de Monsieur le
Président de l'Assemblée Nationale
ABDOU KARIM MEKASSOUA
à Bangui

Objet : Mémorandum

- Considérant, la crise militaro politique et sociale que traverse notre pays ;
- Considérant, le retour à légalité constitutionnelle ;
- Considérant la requête du 15 juillet 2018 par la plate forme de la coordination de auto défenses du pk5 qui demeure sans suit ;
- Vue l'importance de l'initiative de l'Union africaine pour le retour définitif de la paix en RCA ;
- Considérant l'assemblée général qui s'est tenue le 02 juillet 2018 à 14H 30 minute au sein de l'Etat Major de l'auto défense ;
- Soucieux de participer activement dans le processus de la paix et de la réconciliation nationale ;
- Saluant les efforts consentis de la part de la Communauté Internationale et du gouvernement dans la recherche de la paix ; sécurité et de la cohésion sociale sur toute l'étendue du territoire Centrafricaine ;
- Demandons la prise en compte de la plate forme de la coordination de l'auto défense dans le processus du dialogue initier par l'Union Africaine pour un retour définitif de la paix et de la sécurité sociale dans notre pays ;
- Ainsi pour un retour définitif ; l'auto défense avait réussi à regrouper les éléments ainsi que leurs matériels pour éviter tous les désordres et la et la violence ; En citant par exemple ; braquage, la tuerie, et des vols en main armée.
- Mais malheureusement les efforts fournis par l'auto défense ne sont pas prisent en compte pour retrouver la paix, la sécurité, sociale demandé ;

Telles sont Monsieur le Président de l'Assemblée Nationale, nos préoccupations .Pour lesquelles nous vous saurions agréer de prendre en compte. Nous pensons que cette simple perspective pourrait déjà aider la plate forme de la coordination de l'auto défense à prendre le chemin de la paix et de la réconciliation nationale toute fois, la démarche vaut la peine d'être maintenue.


ONT SIGNES LES COMMIS-ZONES

50/50

YAKITE

BEA -REX

TEXAS

CAFE YACOUB

EGLISE SAINT MATHIAS

BOULATA

SAMBO

RAMANDJI

KOKORO

ABC

JAMAÏQUE

Annex 3.1: John Tshibangu's presence and military activities in the Central African Republic.

1. Picture of John Tshibangu at the house of FPRC "general" Fadoul Bashar in January 2018.

Picture obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 4 October 2018.

2. Screenshots of the video showing John Tshibangu (in the middle) with FPRC armed fighters, including "general" Adam Kanton (on the left, with red beret).

Video released on 16 January 2018. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KR0MCz89VNc *[accessed on 1 November 2018].*

Annex 3.2: Deficient controls at airports, ports and on roads to counter regional trafficking in weaponry, natural resources and drugs.

Bangui airport has been used as a platform to smuggle natural resources and military equipment, both from provinces and towards neighboring States (S/2017/1023, para. 104 and S/2018/729, para. 117-118). Such trafficking is facilitated by the shortcomings of controls at Bangui airport, which include, the lack of technical detection equipment to inspect arriving passengers or luggage, and of specialized technical equipment to detect explosives. The multiplicity of security services involved in controls at the airport (police, customs, FACA, gendarmes) also contributes to the blurring of responsibilities among them. Furthermore, many cases of involvement of State officials in trafficking activities are reported. MINUSCA is working with national authorities to reinforce controls at the airport.[4]

Some of the firearms, ammunition and narcotics entering the CAR are smuggled via road from Cameroon, and across the Ubangi river from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo (see also para. xxx and S/2017/1023, para. 106-107, 247-255; S/2018/729, para. 108; S/2017/639, para.92). To counter such illicit trafficking activities, there are regular riverside patrols in Bangui.[5] However, as smuggling often occurs by night there is a need to reinvigorate night patrols. Moreover, there is also a need to adequately equip customs authorities at the seven control posts along the Oubangui river. The lack of weapons at the disposal of customs guards results in FACA, gendarmes and police now overseeing riverside controls at night. Yet, these security forces reportedly continue to often facilitate the nightly imports instead of blocking them (S/2017/1023, para. 248).[6]

Last, even though internal security forces – sometimes backed by MINUSCA – regularly seize weapons and ammunition on commercial convoys,[7] they are not properly equipped to detect the presence of prohibited goods in vehicles and trucks.[8]

[4] Meeting with confidential source, 6 October 2018.
[5] Meeting with customs, Bangui, 6 August 2018
[6] Meetings with customs, Bangui, 6 August and 8 October 2018.
[7] Confidential report, 31 August 2018.
[8] Meeting with confidential source, 6 October 2018.

Annex 4.1: FPRC letter addressed to the humanitarian organizations working in the areas under its control and issued on 10 July 2018.

Document obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 11 July 2018.

FRONT POPULAIRE POUR LA RENAISSANCE DE CENTRAFRIQUE

BUREAU EXECUTIF NATIONAL

PRESIDENCE

N° 0049/FPRC/BEN018

FPRC

République Centrafricaine

Unité - Dignité - Travail

LETTRE OUVERTE AUX ORGANISATIONS HUMANITAIRES

Concerne : Sécurité des acteurs et biens humanitaires dans les zones sous contrôle FPRC

Mesdames et Messieurs actrices/acteurs humanitaire,

Le Bureau Politique du Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC) vous présente ses compliments pour votre engagement en faveur des personnes affectées par la crise qui, depuis des décennies, continue à affliger aux populations centrafricaines des souffrances inutiles. Par vos actions sur le terrain au quotidien auprès des femmes, des enfants et des personnes âgées, vous nous avez montré que « *Ce que nous faisons pour nous-mêmes disparaît avec nous. Ce que nous faisons pour les autres et le monde est immortel et demeure.* » (Albert Painz). Le Bureau Politique du FPRC ne vous remerciera pas assez, car vous êtes, vous les actrices et les acteurs humanitaires, les seul(e)s à panser les plaies des populations meurtries par des politiques irresponsables mis en œuvre en RCA.

Dans notre communiqué de presse n° 049/FPRC/BEN 018, du 22 juin 2018, relatif à la situation sécuritaire à N'délé et Bria, nous dénonçons les actes criminels dont sont victimes les populations civiles et les organisations humanitaires, tant nationales qu'internationales. Nous avons, dans le même communiqué, exprimé notre volonté et notre détermination de lutter contre la criminalité qui sévit dans les zones sous notre contrôle et pris l'engagement de pourchasser tout individu et/ou groupe d'individus auteurs et responsables des actes criminels qui, outre les populations civiles, ciblent également les personnels, les biens et les « compounds » des organisations humanitaires, nationales et internationales, entravent gravement l'action humanitaire.

Mesdames et Messieurs les actrices et acteurs humanitaires,

Face aux braquages des bases ONGI régulièrement rapportés et à la multiplication d'actes criminels, Bureau Politique du FPRC informe aux ONG nationales et internationales que des dispositions ont été prises et la réponse du Conseil National de Défense et de Sécurité (CNDS) pour protéger la population civile et les organisations humanitaires œuvrant dans la région sera ferme. Cette volonté, cette détermination ne sont pas de « vains mots », car des actes sont associés à la parole. En effet, l'ordre a été donné par le commandement suprême du CNDS de traquer tous les malfrats. Les opérations menées à Bria par le CNDS, à l'issue du braquage par les hommes armés du compound d'une ONGI, le 5 juillet 2018, ont abouti à l'arrestation de six personnes et à la récupération du matériel et équipement (3

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ordinateurs), des documents (passeports) et d'autres effets personnels volés pendant ce vol à mains armés.

Le Bureau Politique du FPRC réaffirme sa pleine reconnaissance aux efforts de la communauté internationale et exprime sa gratitude aux actrices et acteurs humanitaires engagés auprès des populations centrafricaines en détresse suite à une guerre qui n'a que trop durée et dont les solutions sont politiques.

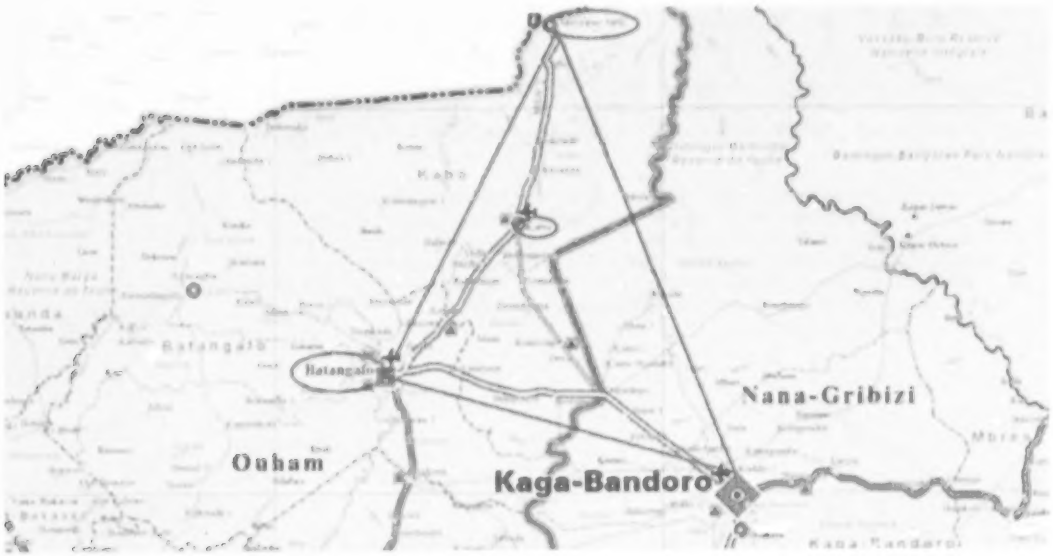
Vous remerciant de l'intérêt que vous porterez à cette lettre ouverte, le Bureau Politique du FPRC, tient à confirmer son soutien aux ONG nationales et internationales car, comme l'écrit bien Ben OKRI, dans son ouvrage *The Famished Road*, publié en 1991, notre conviction est que : « *Suffering people will know justice an beauty. A wonderful change is coming from far away and people will realise the great meaning of struggle and hope. (...). Each new generation begins with nothing and with everything. (...). That is how they are as people. They have infinity of hope and eternity of struggles.* »

Fait à Birao, le 10 juillet 2018

Président

Général / Noureidine ADAM

Annex 4.2: Vulnerability of some specific groups of population in the Kaga Bandoro – Moyenne-Sido – Batangafo triangle.



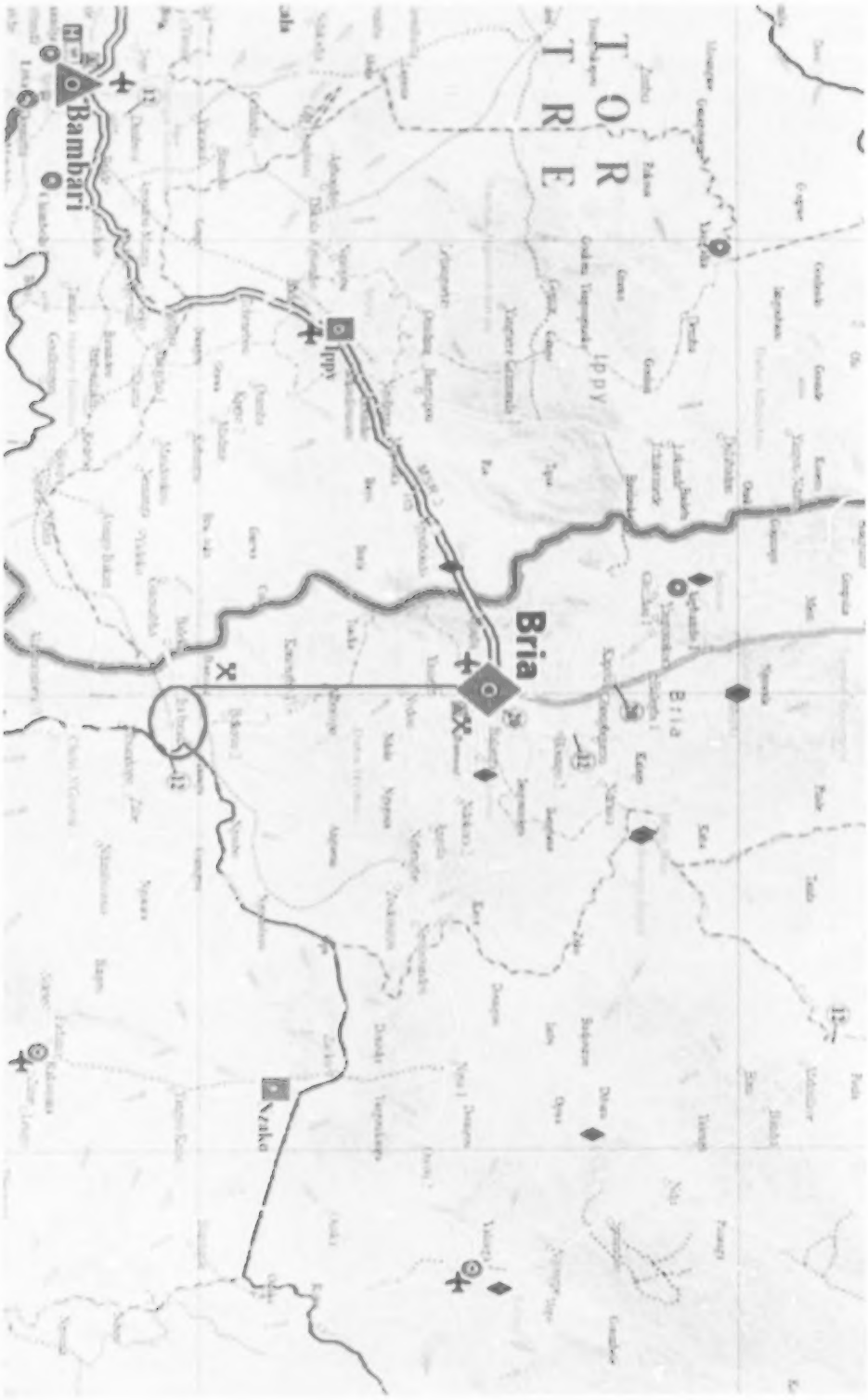
The instability of the Kaga Bandoro – Moyenne-Sido – Batangafo triangle increases the vulnerability of some specific groups of population as it prevents humanitarian actors from providing a humanitarian assistance in the area. In Moyenne-Sido, local authorities observe a small but constant influx of Central African refugees returning from Chad but there are no protection measures in place to help them cross into CAR,[9] nor to accompany their return.[10] Similarly, lacking humanitarian assistance and economic opportunities, many displaced Muslims, who had left Bangui and the south-west of the country in 2014, are leaving the camps in Kabo and Moyenne Sido to take a chance in Kaga Bandoro.[11]

[9] The border between CAR and Chad has been closed since May 2014 (see S/2014/762, para. 42).
[10] Meeting with local authorities and community representatives, Moyenne-Sido, 6 September 2018.
[11] Meeting with IDP representatives, Moyenne-Sido, 6 September 2018.

Annex 4.3: Pictures of the IDP camp in Batangafo after the clashes between ex-Séléka and anti-balaka fighters on 1 November 2018.

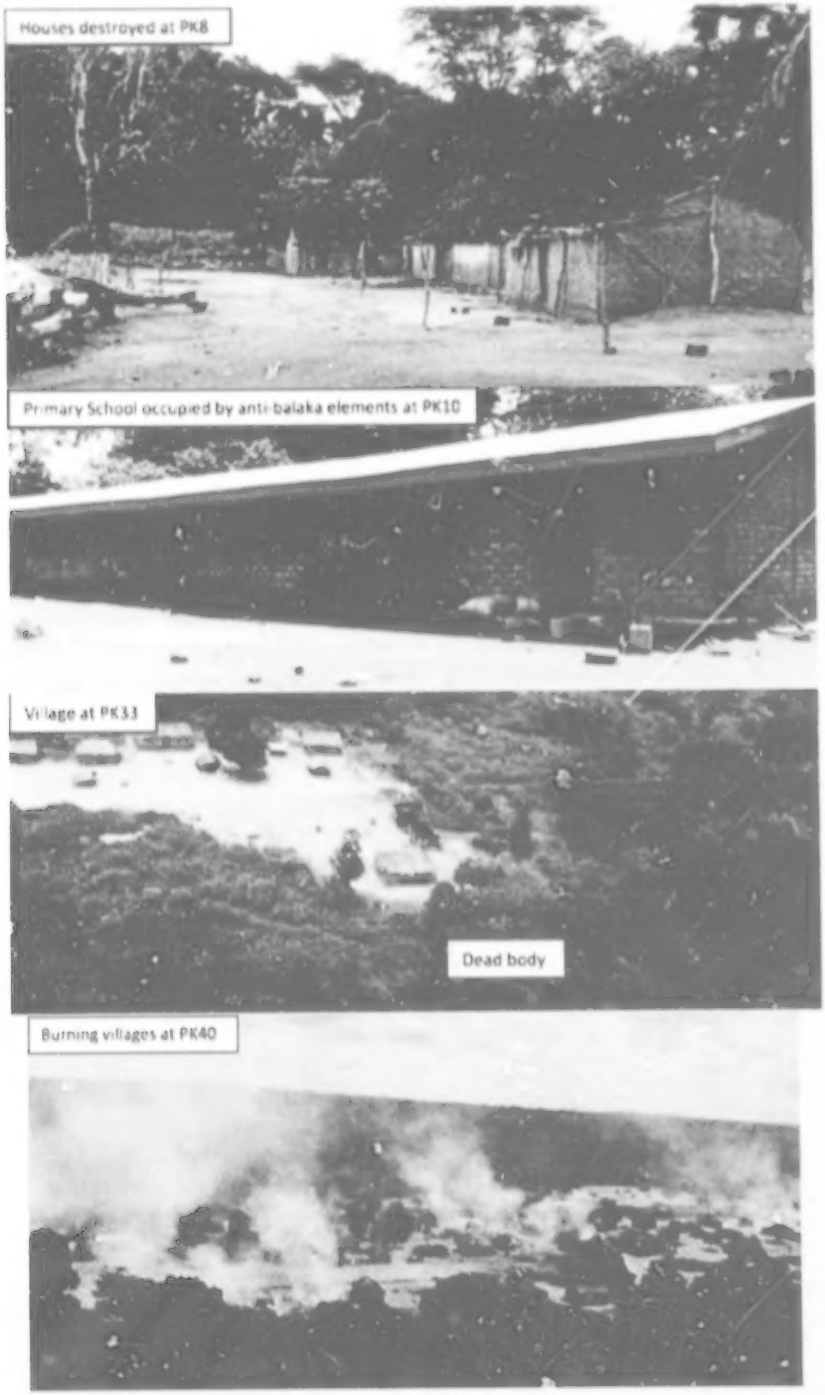
Pictures obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 1 November 2018.

Annex 4.4: Map of Bria and surrounding areas.



Annex 4.5: FPRC attack against the anti-balaka bases along the Irabanda axis on 5 August 2018.

Pictures obtained by the Panel from a confidential source on 3 October 2018.


Houses destroyed at PK8
Primary School occupied by anti-balaka elements at PK10
Village at PK33
Dead body
Burning villages at PK40